

# GROUP PLANNING IN EDUCATION

*Prof. D. Wilhelms*

1945 YEARBOOK, DEPARTMENT OF  
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## CONTENTS

### Part I What Is Group Planning?

1	Education for Social Intelligence, <i>Howard A. Lane</i> . . . . .	2
2	Misunderstandings of Teacher-Pupil Planning, <i>E. T. McSwain</i> . . . . .	11

### Part II Group Planning in Action

3	When Children Plan, <i>Jane Sherrod, Florence Itkin, and Ruby Hill</i> . . . . .	20
4	Planning at Different Levels of Growth, <i>Dorothy Oldendorf</i> . . . . .	26
5	We Planned It That Way, <i>Lester Ball and Ruth H. Simonds</i> . . . . .	31
6	Good Neighbors and Good Citizens Plan, <i>Jessie K. Fitzpatrick</i> . . . . .	38
7	We Learn on a Bicycle Trip, <i>Orden Smucker</i> . . . . .	48
8	Learning to Take Responsibility, <i>Charles M. MacConnell</i> . . . . .	57
9	We Plan Our Own Affairs, <i>Matthew P. Gaffney, Arthur VanDeursen, Donald Frisbie, and Iris Boulton</i> . . . . .	64
10	A Seventh Grade Writes Its Own Code, <i>Nellie L. Merrick</i> . . . . .	71
11	Reports on Group Planning, <i>Inga Olla Helseth</i> . . . . .	75
12	A Community Plans for Teen-agers, <i>Grace Ryan</i> . . . . .	82
13	We Learn to Plan by Planning, <i>Walter A. Anderson</i> . . . . .	86
14	Teachers Plan for Better Teaching, <i>Jennie Campbell, Mary Nielson, and Margaret Williams</i> . . . . .	100
15	Setting the Stage for Planning, <i>Loy Norrix</i> . . . . .	106
16	We All Plan, <i>Virgil M. Rogers</i> . . . . .	110
17	Broadening Horizons thru Planning, <i>C. O. Arndt</i> . . . . .	116
18	Administration Takes a Step Forward, <i>Harry P. Study</i> . . . . .	121

### Part III Principles of Group Planning

19	Principles of Cooperative Group Work, <i>Stephen M. Corey</i> . . . . .	130
20	What Group Planning Means, <i>H. H. Giles</i> . . . . .	139

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THE COMMITTEE wishes to express its appreciation to the authors of this volume and to the many people in schools thruout the country who have contributed descriptions of practices.

PART

## What Is Group Planning?



*Courtesy of Long Beach, California, Public Schools*

**Everyone must "belong" if there is to be group planning**

# 1

## Education for Social Intelligence

THIS is written in the most destructive decade of the bloodiest century of Man. This generation has slain more men in battle, destroyed more precious materials than have all previous generations of mankind. It is the most mothered, most churched, most schooled generation.

We who educate the young, who have uttered theories and administered programs of education, share responsibility for the present condition of Man. We have proclaimed our wisdom and technical skill in the guidance of human development. Dare we look at the record, evaluate our works in terms of results? Have we the humility to see and confess the kind and magnitude of our errors? Have we strength, intelligence, and constructive imagination to conceive and provide circumstances and leadership that will build the kind of people who can live richly and peacefully in this one world?

### *Scientific Progress Requires Cooperation*

The story of Man's scientific and technical progress need not be extended here. He can now make silk purses of sows' ears. His grandfathers reared three of ten babies; now he can rear eight or nine of ten. He can travel from any place on earth to any other in less than three days. He can eat fresh fruits and vegetables in an arctic camp. He can dwell in a comfortable abode in the equatorial desert. He can build an intricate automobile with less than fifteen days of his labor. His voice can be heard everywhere by all who care to listen.

But Man's scientific, industrial, and commercial achievements have far surpassed his moral and intellectual advancement. He lives in a complex world of machines and organizations too big and too expensive for him to own and manage alone. These offer him the ability to secure limitless amounts and varieties of goods, comforts, and joys without endangering his health and safety and without the need for his enslaving any other man.

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By HOWARD A. LANE, *Specialist in Juvenile Problems, Crime Prevention Bureau, Department of Police, Detroit, Michigan*

Too, they place him in a position of extreme interdependency, require of him worldwide cooperation.

Man's progress as a producer of goods as well as his development into a supremely adaptable creature has resulted from differentiation (specialization) and integration (cooperation). By performing narrow skills with special tools he has greatly increased his productivity. As a result of assembling and organizing these specializations the productivity of men has become many times the sum of their individual efforts.

In Man and in society, gains in integration require, as well as result from, a delicate balance of interdependent cooperation. A man is immobilized by temporary failure of any one of numerous small organs of his body. A city is paralyzed by the stoppage of any one of numerous enterprises such as power, water supply, transportation, distribution of food. A world comes to violent conflict when any potent part of it seeks to become more important than all of it. As men become more specialized they become more productive, and more necessary to each other. This is the "reason to be" of democracy.

In our time the foregoing explanation is advanced as a rationalization of fascism rule from above. Technological interdependency requires cooperation. Voluntary cooperation is democracy; cooperation ordered by "higher" authority is totalitarianism. Democracy's claim to superiority rests upon its responsiveness to values and aspirations common to the people. Authoritarianism fails in the long run because it fails to take into account Man's basic disposition to improve the quality of his own living. He resurgesantly insists upon sharing in the determination of goals and of his methods for attaining and securing them. He has far to go to the achievement of a wholesome and tolerable balance between the exercise of individual freedom and its surrender in the interests of the common good thru cooperative endeavor. He must go rapidly.

### *Intelligence Converts Desires into Plans*

The basic method of democracy (cooperation) is the operation of group intelligence. In this volume we use the term "intelligence" in the sense that Dewey wrote, "Intelligence converts desires into plans."<sup>1</sup> It is the ability and disposition of a social group to come to agreement on common goals and to direct concerted, effective action to their attainment.

We hold that the ability and disposition to exercise foresight and thinking is learned. It is learned thru living in situations which require intelligent behavior. The intelligent group, as does the intelligent individual, determines purposes and pursues them thru thinking. Thought is directed to problems: What do we want? What will happen if we do this—or that?

<sup>1</sup> Dewey, John. *Human Nature and Conduct*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1922. p. 254.

What shall we do? How shall we do it? How can we judge the worth of our goals, our endeavors? Thinking leads to action.

We wonder at the current enthusiasm for "quiz kids." Widespread public approval of knowing for its own sake rather than as a guide to more appropriate action turns the principle of group intelligence inside-out. Intelligence must be directed to action.

Education's divorce of study and thought from action is largely responsible for the social apathy that characterizes us today. More than fifty years ago William James wrote:

No matter how full a reservoir of maxims one may possess, no matter how good one's sentiments may be, if one has not taken advantage of every concrete opportunity to act, one's character may remain entirely unaffected for the better. With mere good intentions, hell is proverbially paved. . . . When a resolve or a fine glow of feeling is allowed to evaporate without bearing practical fruit it is worse than a chance lost; it works so as positively to hinder further resolution and emotions from taking the normal path of discharge. There is no more contemptible type of human character than that of the nerveless sentimental and dreamer, who spends his life weltering in a sea of sensibility and emotion, but who never does a manly, concrete deed.

Schools have long professed to be concerned with the development of intellect. In practice, however, the school has conceived intelligence to be individualistic, largely noncooperative. We must turn sharply to an emphasis upon the social nature and social functioning of the mind of Man. Were we to ignore the ethical and altruistic values of social life, enlightened self-interest would show that modern life presents problems too complex for the individual to solve and demands specialized skills and knowledges too varied to be carried in "one small head." In other ways this contention may be validated. Freud and Veblen, in widely separated locales and fields of study, have clearly exposed Man's disposition to wishful thinking. Group endeavor, if wisely managed, tends to neutralize vested interests; it cancels out conflicting and smaller purposes. Conversely, group enterprise taps and mobilizes resources of skill and of wisdom of individuals. Man cannot think clearly alone; he requires the checks and balances of other men and normally seeks conference and counsel when it is his purpose to know the truth, to act in accord with the wider wisdom.

### ***Leadership in Group Intelligence***

In a cooperative group, leaders are pushed into their more responsible positions thru the efforts of the group to achieve concerted action. In a group presuming to be democratic, or to train for living in a democracy, the conception of discipline (control) becomes one of leadership (the release and coordination of human potentialities). Accepted leadership is

essential to the effective exercise of group intelligence. It derives its position and influence from the respect of the group for its peculiar competencies rather than from ordained status.

The primary tasks of leadership are the attainment of consensus as to goals, the active appraisal of resources for attaining goals, wise planning of procedures, appropriate designation and acceptance of responsibilities by parts of the group for operation and completion of plans. The leader sees that all concerned parties are heard, that strong enthusiasms and marked dissents are justly weighed, that the mild desires of a majority shall not outrage the strong concerns of a few. A genuinely democratic group seldom votes; voting tends to emphasize disagreements. It reaches agreements thru discussion and consensus, resolving conflicting interests as much as possible and acting in accord with agreements.

In circumstances in which the leader exercises institutionalized authority, as do most workers in schools at the present time, the group cannot become intelligent unless it clearly understands and accepts as reasonable the limits of its freedom of choice and action. Too often discussions in classrooms and staff meetings are exercises in guessing what the leader has in mind or will accept. Once freedom of choice has been offered the leader \*may not exercise veto power.



Courtesy of Santa Monica City Schools, California

**There must be freedom to experiment,  
make mistakes, and learn**

A significant function of leadership is the discovering, releasing, marshaling of individual competencies and resources within the group. The leader brings forth sharpened concerns, unique abilities and skills, existent valuable relationships among the members of the group. He holds fast to the principle that individual talents and tools are to be prized as assets of the group, and are not claims to the individual's distinction from the group. Because Alice can spell exceptionally well, she shall have the responsibility for reading final proof on the magazine. Because Harry plays the violin beautifully, he can help us entertain our parents.

A major need of our age is popular ability and desire to select able leaders. Has not the school actively disqualified its most capable pupils for acceptance as leaders thru its distinctive awards, acceleration of more capable pupils, isolation of potential leaders from their friends thus promoting disdain in the masses and giving the able youngsters an entirely perverse conception of the role and rewards of exceptional ability? If one is to be accepted as a leader, he must be recognized as peculiarly valuable by his associates. To promote the discriminating disposition to select and respect outstanding leaders, the school must foster group enterprise toward cherished values of the children in order that their own contemporary leaders may be respected and valued by them.

It is in order at this point to warn against vesting extrinsic individual advantages in any position of leadership. We question the wisdom of honors, of "speakers' tables" save for the convenience of the group in hearing the speakers, of all kinds of public displays and ceremonials of public approval apart from the actual functioning of leadership. Certainly modern democracies have come to political grief by vesting financial advantages in positions of leadership. Schools would be more creative, more intelligent if it were possible to attain as much in significance and salary in the classroom as in the office of principal, supervisor, or superintendent. "He who would be greatest among you let him be servant of all" is the fundamental assumption of leadership in the exercise of genuine group intelligence.

### *Who Is a Socially Intelligent Person?*

If we want a cooperative world we must have cooperative people; we must have individuals skilled in and disposed to the ways of cooperation. The orienting core of an educational philosophy is, "What kind of individuals do we seek to develop?" We would, of course, deny that a group is merely the sum of the individuals composing it, but we believe that certain qualities of personality bear heavily upon the quality of group enterprise.

The intelligent individual is sensitive to the quality of living of other people. He is actively disposed to accept the criterion of "the greatest good

for the greatest number for the longest period of time" in judging the appropriateness of his own and social action. In general, Man treats others as he is treated. The cultivation of this quality is a major function and responsibility of leadership. The teacher, supervisor, administrator must feel and exhibit genuine concerns for the inner good feeling of other people if he is to promote its development. "Love thy neighbor as thyself" has become a personal philosophy essential to Man's survival in this "one world." All that is implied in terms such as "critic teachers" or "correcting papers" must be eliminated from school practices.

The intelligent individual is motivated by an active sense of personal responsibility for the well-being of mankind. He claims nothing for himself superior to that for which he works to achieve for the group as a whole. As the child develops in the school's social groups he must experience ever-widening opportunities to be genuinely valuable to other people and to know the gratification that comes from being needed and valued. His concerns and loyalties expand to encompass all mankind.

The intelligent individual is disposed to act in accord with foresight of human outcomes. He cultivates skill and resources for predicting social outcomes of behavior. Neither fluid nor concrete, his mind continuously recreates ideas and values in accord with the enrichment and freedom of



*Courtesy of Monterey, California, Public Schools*

**There must be free interplay of minds**

human personality. The essence of intelligence, and likely of enlightened morality, is the long and wide view of human satisfactions. We like the statement of Lewis Mumford:

Whatever nourishes the personality, humanizes it, refines it, deepens it, intensifies its aptitude and broadens its field of action is good; whatever limits it or thwarts it, whatever sends it back into tribal patterns and limits its capacity for human co-operation and communion must be counted as bad. . . . In the end all of our contrivances have but one object: the continued growth of personalities and the cultivation of the best life possible. . . . Our mode of education and our plan of life must be directed to more humane ends than those that have hitherto governed us.<sup>2</sup>

Participating in group action the individual subverts his own interests to the wishes of the majority in situations requiring common action. He maintains, however, active resistance to the encroachment of the leader and of the group in matters peculiarly individual and not of group concern. Perhaps the entire group must go to the museum, or to the post office, or to the woods; the group may not demand, however, that John Jones shall part his hair in the middle. One wonders if the leader may appropriately demand that he part his hair at all.

The intelligent individual respects genuine authority. He is vigilantly critical of the authority of status; he has high regard for the authority of demonstrated wisdom, knowledge, and skill. He learns discernment in judging the worth of opinions of individuals, respect for relevant and competent data and testimony. He accepts the leadership of competency as he recognizes its worth in the attainment of his goals.

To build these qualities in people, those in positions of leadership must make them function in the operations of the group. Their development requires active sustained attention to commonly desired and attainable goals; it requires constant evaluation, the theme of which is, "How are we doing?" Group activities must require group enterprise. They must be more than a number of persons pursuing their individual purposes in congeniality and proximity. These activities are carried on in accord with the principle that a democracy is simply a group of persons working together to enhance the quality of living of each member of the group.

### ***Some Brakes on Social Intelligence***

Some common educational practices seem to interfere with the development of social intelligence. Most destructive among them is the promotion of individual or "in-group" determination to secure advantage, to prevail. Parents and teachers have great responsibility for this quest so common thruout the world. We say to our own beautiful child,

<sup>2</sup> Mumford, Lewis. *The Condition of Man*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1944. p. 415.

"You are the finest baby in all the world." Teachers like to comment to parents, "Your child is among the best readers in the room"—and parents like to hear it. The motivation of individuals to excellence rather than to being of genuine worth is directly contrary to the achievement of intelligent group enterprise.

We must move rapidly from concern for "Who shall have his way?" to the proposition, "What way will bring the greatest sum of satisfactions to the most of us?" Commonly, grownups imply in manner, if not in direct statement, expectation that certain of our pupils will have the right answer, the appropriate suggestion. We beam upon these "right" children, to the pain of their associates, rather than valuing them as contributors to the group. The results of this practice made it seem promising to a prominent political figure to say of his candidate in a national convention, "He represents no *thinking* group."

In evaluating the individual's contribution to group endeavor we must express appreciation of achievements, not of the achievers. Discriminating praise of the individual seems to act as a habit-forming drug; group appreciation of contributions and achievements seems to be a prime motivator of human action.

The awarding of prizes, distinctions, and honors works against the achievement of group purposes and against the development of characteristics essential to intelligent social action. These, and other extraneous motives, are logically and psychologically unsound in that they set individuals and groups against each other in presenting more immediate, hence more powerful, goals than the more distant purposes of the group as a whole. Misguided leaders, eager for the early appearance of results, commonly set up groups within groups to spur each other competitively toward the goal. Recent scrap drives serve eloquently to illustrate the effects of this error. Schools which set up systems of prizes for collecting scrap made vastly superior collections in the beginning; schools which collected scrap because it was needed in the war effort and which organized active, cooperative endeavor made significantly larger total contributions. Man needs greatly to learn to do good things for genuine reasons. Certainly motivation toward small group and individual egotism and advantage is excessively expensive in the long run. It has been the driving force of the Hitlers, "master-racers," despilers of mankind thruout history.

Educators need to look squarely at the implications of quality grouping—the graded system—in the organization of general education. While Man has grown and improved the conditions of his living thru specialization and integration, his schools have sought more and more to eliminate differences from school groups. The organization of society makes individuals and groups more valuable and more necessary to the whole, thus making them more productive. The graded system, and homogeneous

grouping within it, makes individuals within the groups more alike, less unique, and less valuable to each other. Abundant experimental data and thoughtful reflection indicate strongly that educational groupings should include a wider range of ages and peculiar competencies in which individuals may be more useful, interesting, and valuable to each other.

In an ever-evolving democracy it is not enough that the school represent Man's culture on a childish level. The center of the school's attention must be at the point of growth of that culture. In our time Man's greatest developmental task, and point of rapid growth, is the achievement of worldwide cooperative living. Modern technology leaves no neutral ground between peace and war. The school, then, must provide for learning thru living. Teachers and pupils must grow in the knowledge of how other men live, of the circumstances that make life good, of the world's resources for richness of life. The school must carry on ways of living together that promote personal responsibility for the condition of Man. It must carry on group enterprises directed to the continued improvement of the quality of living of the people for whom it is concerned. Education will be "good" to the extent that men plan and work together to make life more zestful and more secure for all, everywhere.



*Courtesy of Louisville, Kentucky, Public Schools*

**Everyone enjoys seeing a plan come true**

## Misunderstandings of Teacher-Pupil Planning

TEACHER-PUPIL planning is a relatively complex process in meaningful teaching and purposeful learning. The outcomes to be achieved in the application of the process in the classroom are conditioned by the understandings of administrators, teachers, and pupils regarding certain procedures and requirements involved in teacher-pupil planning experiences. However, caution must be taken that teacher-pupil planning does not become trite and meaningless—a “popular ware” in classroom practice.

Misconceptions of and malpractices in teacher-pupil planning may emerge when too much administrative or supervisory pressure is employed in advocating the use of the planning process in the classroom. Likewise, inadequate understanding on the part of the teacher of the purposes and technics in teacher-pupil planning may cause the pupils to experience confusion and undesirable learnings in their use of the planning process. A discussion, therefore, of certain misunderstandings of teacher-pupil planning may help in improving the use of a valuable classroom method for motivating and for guiding the development of pupils in learning the values and technics in democratic living.

### *Planning Begins before the Class Meets*

The idea that no planning by the teacher is needed in advance of planning with the pupils in the classroom reflects a gross misunderstanding of the teacher-pupil planning process. Reflective preparation by the teacher for classroom leadership is required for effective teaching. Productive teacher-pupil planning in the classroom depends greatly on the quality of preparation made by the teacher in anticipation of the oppor-

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By E. T. McSWAIN, *Professor of Education, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois*

tunities and needs that may arise in the classroom situation. Preclass planning enables the teacher to enter the classroom planning situation with a working guide based on an appraisal of previous contacts with the pupils, both in terms of the needs and interests of the pupils and the curriculum requirements. Preclass planning insures more effective teacher-pupil planning.

Preclass preparation does not justify the teacher in imposing ready-made plans on the pupils. The purpose of preclass planning is to make it possible for the teacher to achieve a higher quality of work when *planning with* the pupils. The successful teacher finds it productive to include in preclass preparation (a) consideration for appropriate sequence between previous classroom situations and any anticipated classroom experiences; (b) consideration of means to care more adequately for individual and group needs; (c) consideration of ways to secure improvement in the responses of the pupils when planning; (d) selection of certain materials and references; (e) examination of any problems or difficulties that may be encountered by the pupils; (f) selection of content that may evoke new interest; (g) consideration of useful procedures to motivate reflective discussion and thinking by the pupils.

The teacher who plans in advance for the classroom planning situations makes it easier for the pupils to discover and to accept a greater feeling of purposefulness, of meaning, and of security in determining thru group planning the most desirable activities and procedures to carry on in the classroom.

One of the desired outcomes to be gained by the pupils in planning is that of discovering and of accepting the meaning of and need for continuity and organization in progressing from one area of work to other areas of experiences. Inadequate preclass preparation by the teacher may lead to classroom learnings that are somewhat unorganized and unrelated. The emerging psychological sequence in the learning of the pupils is conditioned greatly by the means that the teacher uses in making preparation for the teacher-pupil planning activity. Constructive planning places upon teacher and pupils the obligation to accept concern for improvement in the scope, the organization, and the sequence in planning the classroom activities and working standards from day to day. Careful preclass planning is, therefore, a correlative part of effective teacher-pupil planning.

### ***More Than a "List of Suggestions"***

Another misconception of teacher-pupil planning may be observed when visiting in some classrooms where the teacher and pupils are planning the day's schedule or day's work program. In such situations, the teacher asks the pupils to tell what they think should be included in the day's program. Many children are eager to offer suggestions. These sug-

gestions are then recorded by either the teacher or one of the pupils. After some time spent in telling what the pupils think should be done or in expressing what they want to do, the day's plan is completed. What has been completed in a planning situation of this type is only a *list of suggestions*. Such an experience may cause the pupils to acquire a poor concept of the meaning and function of the teacher-pupil planning period.

Cooperative planning of the day's program can become a most worthwhile experience only when the teacher motivates the pupils to appraise their suggestions in terms of what outcomes may be achieved if the suggested ideas are carried out. Reflective thinking about the results of suggested things to do encourages the pupils to appraise the merits of one idea in contrast with another idea. Each suggestion needs to be appraised in terms of its appropriateness, the probable outcomes, and the requirements involved in order to complete the work successfully. Such experience in teacher-pupil planning fosters development in the ability to make better choices to be included in the day's program.

### *Keeping an Eye on Long-Range Results*

Poor planning of classroom activities frequently occurs when the classroom program is planned largely around the immediate interests of the pupils. Purposeful teacher-pupil planning must give adequate attention to the expressed interests of the pupils, altho planning cannot be restricted solely to their immediate interests. Pupils are not always the best judges of their interests. If the work of the classroom is confined to immediate interests, the pupils suffer from the lack of motivation and of experiencing the discovery of new interests.

The teacher must accept the opportunity presented in constructive planning to make suggestions and in certain situations to include in the planning specific requirements in order to encourage variety and extension in the interests of the pupils. Many pupils now in school are not experiencing the quality of development in keeping with their abilities because too much of the work is centered around their immediate interests. Such pupils need the guidance of a mature teacher in order to discover, and to accept with meaning, interests, and content that are challenging. Teacher-pupil planning provides a definite place and responsibility for the teacher to offer meaningful understanding activities and requirements that will motivate the maximum development of the pupils.

### *Taking the Job Seriously*

Teacher-pupil planning is a process that requires reflective study, discussion, and thinking of an evolving quality. Teachers and pupils should recognize that purposeful planning is serious, yet interesting work. To think of planning as an easier way of working for either pupils or the

teacher is a misconception. An unkindness is done to pupils if the planning procedures and planning standards foster the attitude that individual or group planning is an easier way to work than under the specific directions of the teacher. It is highly important that the teacher help the pupils to interpret and to accept a serious attitude when engaged in the teacher-pupil planning process. It is necessary that the pupils accept the planning period to be as important as any classroom activity and to be willing to observe appropriate standards for individual and group behavior.

The teacher should strive at all times to help the pupils to understand the importance of good workmanship and to find delight in outcomes that can only be attained thru hard work. Boys and girls are ready to do real work when they understand the functional value of the work and have had a share in selecting it. As the result of group thinking, pupils are more willing to assign to themselves higher standards of behavior and achievement. Mental power can be developed only as the learner comes to understand, and to accept by practice, an increasing quality of psychological discipline.

### *Everyone Is in It*

On occasion one may hear the statement made that teacher-pupil planning gives too many opportunities for leadership to the more responsive pupils and not enough participation for the less responsive pupils—"A few members of the class assume too much responsibility during the planning period." In classroom situations where such a statement may be appropriately made, one can readily assume that the teacher and pupils do not have a functional concept of the planning process. One of the purposes to be achieved in teacher-pupil planning is an exchange of thinking on the part of every member in the group. It is the duty of the teacher to see that each pupil contributes to the total thinking and planning of the group. Pupils who are too ready to offer suggestions or to give ideas should be encouraged to recognize that one of their responsibilities in the group situation is to give other pupils a chance to be heard.

Participation by the less responsive students may be motivated if care is taken to give adequate recognition when these students contribute ideas or suggestions. Greater participation in the group planning process may be brought about by the teacher encouraging pupils to take their turns in contributing to the group planning process. It is true that in some classroom situations a few pupils may more readily voice ideas that are of greater value than other members of the group. However, teachers should seek at all times to encourage the less responsive pupils to speak out and to help them receive recognition by the class when they do make contributions.

The plan of action that emerges from the planning period should be carefully appraised to see that individuals in the group receive their share of the work to be done. Delegated responsibility should be made in terms of individual interest and individual abilities. In addition, it is necessary that the teacher seek to help some of the less responsive pupils to be more willing and ready to accept delegated responsibility. One desired outcome in teacher-pupil planning is the development of the feeling of group meaningfulness among the members of the group. This feeling can be developed by encouraging adequate consideration for the thinking and sharing of each member of the group.

### *The Teacher—Boss or Group Member?*

On one occasion a visitor was invited to visit in a class where the pupils were to plan cooperatively an excursion to be made in relation to their work in the social studies. At the beginning of the period the teacher told the pupils that she wanted them to suggest places that they thought they should go to secure certain information about one phase of their work. Several children responded promptly. However, it was soon obvious to the visitor that the teacher had decided in advance where the children



*Courtesy of Central School, Glencoe, Illinois*

**Everyone has a responsibility**

were to go and that she was merely using the planning period to get the children to accept her idea. This planning situation indicated that the teacher did not have a functional understanding of the teacher-pupil planning process. The situation indicated that she was not willing to have her idea as to where the class should go appraised along with the ideas suggested by the pupils before making a definite decision.

Dangers are evident in situations where a teacher attempts to use the planning process as a means to sell ready-made plans or ideas to the pupils. The teacher should prepare in advance of the classroom situation plans that she thinks are desirable for the group to consider. However, at the time of the planning period, the teacher should be willing to share her plans with the children in the same spirit that she is asking the children to express their desires or plans. The pupils after reflective discussion may come to see the value of the teacher's plan and be willing to accept it because they understand its meaning and value. It is unsound for the teacher to expect the children to adopt plans merely because the teacher has placed before the children what she thinks should be done.

Children often are too ready to accept the suggestions of the teachers. It is necessary that steps be taken to encourage children to appraise their plans of action alongside the plans suggested by the teacher. The decision as to final plans should be the result of the decision of the group after careful study of the probable outcomes.

### *Helping Youngsters Understand Democratic Living*

Purposeful planning in the classroom must take into account both the needs of the pupils and the needs of adults in the community in which the school is located. One purpose in providing school experiences for children is to help them to discover and to accept the duties involved in citizenship both on the child level and the adult level. Deferred goals, therefore, have a legitimate place in the teacher-pupil planning process. During the planning of work to be done, every opportunity should be used to help the boys and girls to acquire an emerging understanding of the duties in democratic citizenship.

The point of view just expressed must not be confused with an older idea regarding the duty of the school to prepare children for adult participation by imposing upon them content and requirements selected entirely by adults. However, it may be fair to assume that, in changing from the older concept of education for citizenship, too much emphasis was given to the present interest and needs of children.

Teacher-pupil planning activities in the various types of classroom situations can be so directed as to meet the interests of children and at the same time help them become aware of their responsibility for thinking about the needs of society and the duties of a citizen in a democratic

society. One duty in democratic citizenship is to plan intelligently with both present and future needs in mind. Proper provision should be made in the teacher-pupil planning process for the development of attitudes, technics, and skills that will help boys and girls in better understanding what will be required of a citizen in the postwar years. Planning for the future, as well as for the present, is needed in order to give balance and direction to the planning of certain types of classroom activities.

It is reasonable to assume that parents are justified in asking of the school what is being done to help boys and girls become better prepared to live intelligently in the postwar years. It is important, therefore, that administrators and teachers help parents to see that teacher-pupil planning activities stress preparation for citizenship. Parents can be helped to see that the planning process, when controlled by reflective study and thinking, helps pupils to understand the need for functional content and skills and also helps them to make wiser choices and to work more diligently in carrying out successfully the activities that have been chosen.

### ***Teacher-Pupil Planning Will Work in Your School***

Frequently teachers may be heard to make the remark, "I would like to offer teacher-pupil planning experiences in my curriculum, but the curriculum and the organization of the school do not provide sufficient time for the use of the planning process." Fortunately the planning process can be used effectively in many types of school and curriculum organizations. Even in a highly departmentalized program there is the opportunity present for the teacher who desires to do so to make effective use of the planning process. In such situations it would be necessary for the teacher to help the pupils budget the class time so that the planning period would not consume too much time. As pupils become more proficient in working with the teacher, effective planning can be done in a relatively short period of time.

In school situations where there are set curriculum assignments for the different grades, purposeful planning can be carried on in order that pupils may understand better the work required of them. When the administrators and teachers have a clear, functional understanding of the purposes and technics involved in teacher-pupil planning, adequate modifications of the process can easily be made to meet the requirements of various types of curriculums and school organizations.

### ***"Official" Attitudes Condition Outcomes***

It is a mistaken idea to assume that teacher-pupil planning can be imposed thru administrative or supervisory procedures. Guidance in the planning process can be more constructively given when the teacher has had an opportunity to experience the planning process in sharing with

administrators and supervisors the responsibility for determining curriculum policies and curriculum practices. The leadership of administrators and supervisors, therefore, conditions the quality and amount of cooperative planning done in the classroom. When administrators and supervisors seek to apply the principles of cooperative planning in their work with teachers, it is reasonable to assume that the teacher in turn will offer more opportunities for meaningful planning to the pupils in the classroom.

Misunderstanding and malpractice regarding teacher-pupil planning may be prevented by encouraging teachers to engage in small group study to determine what they accept to be the significant purposes and productive technics involved in the teacher-pupil planning process. Opportunities for this type of development on the part of the teacher should be made a legitimate part of any in-service program. To hasten the adoption of the teacher-pupil planning process without sufficient understanding on the part of teachers may provide a very undesirable learning experience for the pupils. The philosophy and procedures used by members of the administrative staff in the carrying on of the in-service activities for the teachers will determine to a great degree the quality and amount of teacher-pupil planning made available to pupils in the classroom.

If this yearbook succeeds in encouraging administrators and teachers to join together in group study to determine what are the requirements in constructive teacher-pupil planning and to seek means by which to insure greater continuity in the use of the teacher-pupil planning process from grade to grade, the goals of the committee will have been achieved.

PART ||

## Group Planning in Action



*Courtesy of International News Photo Service  
Holyoke, Massachusetts*

**A plan for a play starts at story-telling time**

## 3

## When Children Plan

If we are agreed that planning is a necessary skill, we, as teachers, must provide for actual practice in its perfection. Such a skill requires practice just as does the ability to read or to add or to subtract. This practice involves trial, evaluation, new plans, and new ideas, and the classroom is the laboratory for the children's investigation and perfection of this ability.

If the classroom situation is one in which the flow of all ideas, the responsibility of all decisions, the balance of all power rests with the teacher, we may expect the child to become passive in allowing his classroom experiences to be directed solely by the teacher. There is no purpose in planning unless it paves the way toward solving a problem, and the teacher often does the child an injustice not only by paving the way for him but also by solving the problem when it arises.

### *Fifth-Graders Learn While Candle-Making*

Work periods are rich in illustrations of planning. In a fifth grade which was studying pioneer life the children wished to make candles. The conversation ran like this:<sup>1</sup>

TEACHER: If we are going to make candles, what do we need to do first?

BOB: We need to get some wax.

JOE: I think they called it tallow. It came from the fat part of the meat; the pioneers fried the meat to get the tallow out. It sort of melted out.

SALLY: Then what did they do with it?

DON: We could let it cool and then press it around the wick.

JOE: I think they used molds to shape the candles.

<sup>1</sup> From a stenographic report of a fifth grade at University Summer Demonstration School, Berkeley. Florence Itkin, teacher.

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RUBY HILL, *Principal, Summer Demonstration School, University of California, Berkeley*

TEACHER: Do you think we really know enough about it yet to make the candles successfully?

CHILDREN: No.

TEACHER: Where can we get our information?

JOE: I think the book that I read about the tallow told how they made candles, too.

MARY: What colors were they? Did they have all colors like we do?

TEACHER: That is a good question. I shall write it on the board, and perhaps someone will find the answer. Joe, you know of one book which may have some help for us, and there are some others there too. Is there some other place where we could find information to help us?

SUE: Shall I look in the picture file?

TEACHER: Perhaps you will find some help there. What would you expect to find it filed under?

SUE: Candles—lights—maybe homes.

TEACHER: Anything else?

ROBERT: Couldn't it be under "occupations"?

TEACHER: Yes, it might be. We have asked a number of questions; let's list them and see if our reading will answer them.

The children, guided by the teacher, phrased the questions which she listed on the board. The teacher next listed books as a bibliography for the subject, and the children enthusiastically read to find the answers to the questions and to assemble the instructions for making the candles. The books had been arranged in groups of varying difficulty so that each child read a book which he could handle easily. Later the group met together to share the information and to plan their next steps.

MARY: Well, Joe was right. Tallow comes from suet, and they call it "trying out the fat."

TEACHER: Did you find how the pioneers made the candles?

DON: They used a mold sometimes and sometimes they dipped them.

SUE: I found these pictures in the file. The wicks were tied on a stick.

The discussion continued. The questions were answered thru the sharing of information and the plans for actual work were made.

TEACHER: We will put the tallow in this bucket. Will we all be able to dip at once?

BETTY: We'd get in each other's way, and it'd be awfully messy if we bumped each other.

TEACHER: How shall we do it?

Suggestions were made, each evaluated, the final plan being to form a line around the bucket, dipping, and allowing the tallow to set between dips. Two children wished to string up a mold while the rest dipped. The entire process was planned in sequential steps, put on a chart, and reviewed before the actual work began the next day. Did the children have ex-

perience in planning? Undoubtedly they did! The teacher could have told them of candle-making, informed them that they were to file around the kettle in a single line, directed the entire process with a display of thirty beautiful candles as an end product. The candles would have grown, but would the children have grown in their ability to plan their work?

In evaluating the lesson we see many rich experiences for children: (a) it allowed for free conversation with certain outstanding examples of vocabulary development; (b) it was based on a real child need; (c) it gave opportunity for each child to read at his level of ability; (d) it allowed children to use several sources of information; (e) it gave opportunity to list sequences of activities; and (f) it gave opportunity to test the sequence by actually going thru the process.

### *We Plan a Play about Indians*

Planning is a large part of the dramatic play period as we may see in the following account taken from a third grade studying Pueblo Indians:<sup>2</sup>

TEACHER: When shall we have our play start?

ELSIE: We could start out with breakfast and have the whole day to play.

SHERON: We could sing the morning call.

TEACHER: Where would the people be when they play the morning call?

SHERON: On the roof and in the pueblo.

TEACHER: How would the people behave while the morning call was sung?

BETTY: They would stand still.

TEACHER: What do we have in our lives when we stand very quiet and still?

TOM: Church.

TEACHER: Yes, and the morning call was something like our church.

JIM: Then we would eat breakfast and then go out into the cornfield to work.

TEACHER: Who will tell us when to start work?

SHERON: The chief.

BILL: The women could be grinding corn; some can make pottery.

TEACHER: After you finish grinding corn and making pottery how can our play end? Do you remember how Morning Star's day ended?

After the plans were fully made with each child knowing what he was to do, the group left the circle. Each child developed his own play within the total pattern. During the following evaluation period points of improvement were brought out, fine bits of action praised, and questions listed for further research as an aid for better future playing.

The values to the child of this period were that (a) the children were made secure in knowing their individual responsibility in the total pattern; (b) rich opportunities for oral expression were afforded; (c) the children

<sup>2</sup> From a stenographic report of a third grade at University Summer Demonstration School, Berkeley. Daisy Goodman, teacher.

saw the reason for sharing equipment for smooth running play; (d) needs arose for further learnings; (e) the children more greatly appreciated a culture by their participation in it; and (f) they had the practice in planning.

### *A Wing and a Plan*

Planning at a sixth-grade level may be seen in the following account taken as the group organized for a rhythm period during which they wished to express planes flying on the radio beam:<sup>3</sup>

GORDON (acting as chairman): We need four airplanes. Who'll be airplanes?

John, Don, Beaver, Julia. Who'll be the control tower? George, you be.

GEORGE: I don't want to. I have to run the buzzer for the signals.

GORDON: All right. Vernon, you be the control tower.

VERNON: I don't want to.

GORDON: But you haven't been anything; you be the tower.

VERNON: Oh—I will.

GORDON: Who'll be the radio beam stations? Chuck, Beatty, Sally, Doris.

Planes, you belong at the field. Are you ready to take off? Control tower, what do you say?

(The planes take off; the beams give the signal.)

GORDON: Hey, you're going too fast; the orchestra can't go that fast.

(They try it again until each child has made a perfect flight.)

TEACHER: Are you ready for the orchestra to join you?

GORDON: Yes, if the planes remember not to go so fast.

TEACHER: I wonder if anyone watching has a suggestion to make about the beam stations? Did you see anyone being an especially good station?

JULIA: I liked the way Sally stood up straight. She looked like she was being one. Beatty sat down.

BEATTY: I was being a short beam.

TEACHER: Can we really *be* beams? If we can't, is there some way that we can give the feeling of being mechanical?

VERNON: They could chop their hands up and down—sorta like flashes.

GORDON: Let's try it that way.

TEACHER: Who would like to come over here and form the percussion orchestra?

(Many of the group join the orchestra and plan the accompaniment.

The planes hear the A-signal and the N-signal and test their flights.)

GORDON: Chuck, you wrecked it by being silly; keep your arms up like wings. George, get your buzzer with the orchestra.

And so the pattern of the radio beam progressed. In this experience we see many of the elements of planning which have been noted in the previous examples; we also see at this level the acceptance of a member of the group as a leader in the planning and the control of a child thru group disapproval.

In the examination of a creative lesson, such as art, music, or written

<sup>3</sup> From a stenographic report of a sixth grade at University Summer Demonstration School, Berkeley. Jane Sherrod, teacher.

expression, we find that the process of planning is still an integral part in the success of the work. The children need to plan the steps of their work, whether it be merely with pencil and paper or with complex paint and delicate tissue. They need to plan what they are to accomplish as individuals and as a group and to know and feel the reason for their activities.

Some of us believe that pupil planning has been slighted in the skill subjects and that reading, spelling, and arithmetic have been taught as subjects planned and designated by state texts with little or no regard for pupil planning, needs, or interests. Each of the examples previously given shows the need for reading and the evidence of information read before the period began. In a like manner each unit has rich opportunities for arithmetic, for actual practice in the skill of arithmetical computation and problem-solving at the level of the grade, and for the realization of the need of that skill. The pupils may plan the organization, the method of drill, the standards of work for the skill subjects with as much ease and care as in the lessons which we have just read.

### *Why Teachers Plan*

We have discussed child-planning at some length. To assume, however, that the teacher is dispensable and that children can carry on independently would be to go to an unhappy extreme.

There is no conflict between teacher-planning and pupil-planning. Teacher-planning may be thought of under two heads: "organization planning" and "purpose planning." "Organization planning" must take into account the important consideration of the unit of work, its subject-matter, and the possible paths which it may take as determined by the needs and interests of children. Such planning also includes the choice of paper, the arrangement of desks and tables in terms of the activities, the assortment of books to meet the needs of the abilities of the children, and the multitudinous other details which make for a smoothly-running classroom.

"Purpose planning" recognizes the needs of the children and the selection of experiences to meet those needs. Before a work period a child wishes to make a locomotive and plans the process; the teacher's plan is to place the child in a rich experience wherein he may increase his motor coordination, grow in social adjustment, and have the experience of expressing himself orally. The activity satisfies the planning of both the teacher and the child. As we have felt that planning is necessary for the child, so is it necessary for the teacher to plan in order that each child may be given the guidance and experiences which he individually needs. We, as teachers, must know what we are doing and why; we must plan.

### *Our Job, Step-by-Step*

In looking over the planning periods we see that there are certain characteristics inherent in them all. There was a desire, a need, a problem in each. This problem was not always stated but in each case, implied. No one said, for instance, "We must organize sufficiently well to make successful candles," but the desire was obviously there and recognized.

The next step in planning is the selection of possible paths of action: "Shall we press the wax around the wick or shall we use molds?" Where past experience, knowledge, and judgment seem inadequate, a reputable source is consulted; so a book was read and pictures viewed to aid the candle-making. Next comes the selection of the path of action, the application of that path to the problem, and finally the evaluation of the success of the plan. The steps of planning are much the same as those of problem-solving, for, indeed, would we plan if we did not have the problem of making our actions come to a successful conclusion?

We find that as children have more experiences in planning, the discussions take on more character. The conversations show the influences of new knowledges that have been gained thru purposeful reading, contacts with many sources of information, such as pictures, exhibits, excursions, environment. It is important that a child form the habit of planning his activities, for as he plans, evaluates, executes his work in the light of his plans, he learns to know himself and his capabilities. He develops an awareness of his responsibility toward the group and himself to maintain the highest standard of work which he is capable of producing. Results of fertile planning that are well executed can be seen whether they are things the child has made with his hands, found in a book, dramatized in a play, written, painted, or danced.

We may condense all that we have said by the following statements:  
(a) The freedom of the individual in a democracy demands that he be skilful in the art of planning. (b) The classroom is the laboratory set by society for the training and drill of children in the tools which they need to live successfully. Hence (c) We must give children every opportunity for vital living experiences in the process of planning.

## Planning at Different Levels of Growth

PEOPLE who are concerned with the problems of an interdependent world will want those responsible for education to help the individual recognize and meet his social responsibilities. Are we willing to provide school programs for children in atmospheres which will develop essential attitudes toward social responsibilities? Teachers who have sought to understand social atmospheres in the school believe that the essential differences are found in the processes of living which take place within the classroom and within the school itself. Are children living and working where mere conformity to an adult-planned program is expected of the individual or are they living and working democratically with a teacher who knows and utilizes the best technics of group planning for good group life?

Self-discipline and a feeling of need for assuming social responsibilities are attitudes which will result from the carrying out of plans for the daily living of a group. When are children ready for such group planning? The first group life that a child experiences should be so planned that he makes suggestions and decisions and assumes responsibilities. Kindergarten teachers have long found it worthwhile to plan with children a large portion of the activities they experience.

### *The Youngest Can Plan*

The kindergarten group is making a garden. What shall we plant? Where shall we get the seeds? When should seeds be planted? Who will spade the garden plot? When will we be ready to plant? Group discussions of real importance will bring forth group plans in answer to all such questions. Individual responsibilities assumed within this kindergarten group become social responsibilities. A child who has promised to bring the necessary string to be used in marking off the rows is expected by the group to do so. Self-discipline is definitely necessary in a group that has

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decided who shall spade and who shall plant. Real living with children means meeting real problems with real planning.

Often we find better planning in kindergarten than in upper grades. What do schools do that each succeeding year we often find the child increasingly less able to plan and suggest suitable activities for group life? Could it be because the first grade marks the age level at which the school feels the responsibility for beginning the academic development of the child? That it also marks the age at which there is a real tendency to lose sight of the necessity for all-round development of the individual? It is imperative that the school recognize that right attitudes and habits toward group living must be formed while the child is acquiring a mastery of skills and the understandings of the content subjects.

Group planning for group life must continue throughout the elementary-school program. At age six the child has just begun to meet the problems of adjusting to satisfactory group life. Real experiences must continue to promote this development. Daily plans must provide them. How the plans are made and written down will vary with the individual teacher and the group of children. Let us examine some plans of daily living we could find at the various age levels which will show the changes that take place consistent with the growth and maturity of the child.

### *A First Grade Plans for Monday*

We will have a work time.

We will need time to clean up the room.

We want to play games in the gymnasium.

We must write invitations to the second-grade children to come to our play.

We will need to practice our play.

We will work on our scenery at work time today.

We will want a visiting time and a reading time.

We need to choose our jobs for this week.

In this first grade there are things to do and as a natural result, a sharing of responsibilities will be expected for satisfactory accomplishment of such plans. Good work times cannot go on in any group without being followed by good clean-up times. Most teachers find a choosing of "jobs for the week" a way to help the individual contribute his part to facilitate the life of the group. Many opportunities to need and to use the skills possible for a six-year-old are provided in purposeful ways by such plans.

Plans in the first grade should be written in sentences for the beginning reader. By second grade we may find children making abbreviated expressions for any routine procedures.

### *Friday's Plans for Second-Graders*

A work time and a clean-up time.

Time to read and to do our number games.

Miss \_\_\_\_\_ will come for music at eleven o'clock today.

Outdoor playtime.

We need to check our job sheet and see how well we have done our jobs this week.

We will go to the first-grade play.

We would like a visiting time. We want to hear about John's trip to California.

The second-grade plans show children ready to work with numbers. The plans as made for this day may be more than can be accomplished. Eliminating for the day and carrying over until the next day give reason for the evaluation and check-up on plans as completed. The scheduling of exact times for certain group activities becomes necessary as is seen in the plan for the music teacher to come at eleven o'clock. The lunch time and the rest time are not mentioned in the daily plan since the children and teacher recognize this as an accepted part of the day that needs no planning.

The checking of the job sheet reveals the individual who is able to take a job and to do it to the satisfaction of the group with whom he lives. Invitations to share the experiences of other grades as occurs with the second grade attending a first-grade play, builds for interest in the life beyond the single classroom. The visiting times will serve to acquaint the group with the interests of the individual but will also serve as excellent opportunities for group discussions on the matters that really count in the daily lives of children.

The range of activities for the third-grade age will show the gradual growth and change taking place as the child gains in his use of the skills at this primary level. He is beginning to find a desire for individual, written expression but feels the need for help with his spelling. Time will be given for the necessary drill on skill subjects which his life now demands of him.

### *What the Third Grade Does on Wednesday*

Study time—we need to study our spelling words and then work on our arithmetic.

We need to make a list of things we want Miss \_\_\_\_\_ to help us with at work time.

Work time.

Music time.

Gym time at 2:00 p.m.

We need to write thank you notes to Mrs. —— room. Some of us want to work on our newspaper stories.

We will have our visiting time about new experiments.

We will go to the library for our reading time.

This third grade is planning how to work with the art teacher when she comes to their room. Work times at this age level create purposes for knowing better ways to do things. The specialist is able to render a real service where she is needed.

The primary child gains his first social concepts thru social living. The third-grade child is beginning to orient himself in the world in which he lives thru his curiosity and growing interest in nature, science, and the world around him. Careful teacher guidance and direction in group planning at this stage of development will help the child to be ready to have a better understanding of the social studies as they are introduced in the later elementary levels. The fourth-grade age child wants to know about people "now and long ago," people "far and near." The skilful teacher will help the child to find answers to his many questions, and this growth and direction of the group will be noted in its plans.

#### *A Fourth-Grader's Day*

Reports on the different ways people lived long ago. John, Marion, Edith, and Ray are ready to report.

Discussion time to compare the ways we live today with reports as given.

A time to read from our booklist for information on "How animals were first tamed and how they became useful to man."

Work time.

Time to study for spelling check-up.

Arithmetic work time.

We will invite the fifth grade to sing with us today.

Choose the stories we plan to read to first grade at 2:00 p.m.

Finish writing stories for the newspaper.

Write to the office about the need for a new school flag.

The plans for this particular day in the fourth grade show the reading and discussion times both being used for social studies work of a very definite nature. However, there must continue to be time provided on other days for the reading the child does for pleasure rather than for information. Discussion times must be so balanced that fourth-grade children will not always be concerned with the lives of people faraway rather than their own lives. The teacher as a guide will help the children to understand better their own lives while trying to learn something of the lives of other people.

A fourth-grade group that plans to read stories to first-grade youngsters will seldom "tease" or "bully" those same younger children. The school must set the quality of living they want between groups of children by sponsoring appropriate activities to develop right attitudes. This particular fourth grade has assumed the responsibility of caring for the school flag. It is their duty to see that it is raised and lowered each school day. Quite naturally it becomes their job to report the need for replacement. All such experiences have very definite ways of making children feel that the school belongs to them and they are responsible for it.

### *Building Self-Discipline in Social Living*

No single day's plans for any grade could include the entire range of activities experienced by the group but a balance of activities would usually be found within the week. The illustrations of plans for each level have not been given as a pattern to be followed but rather to picture the type of activities within a school which call for self-discipline in social living.

At the fifth- and sixth-grade level a more definite need is felt for group planning over longer periods of time than the single day or even the week. This is especially true in the field of the social studies. At the beginning of each week the definite activities which occur regularly, such as gym or music or art with special teachers, are "blocked in" and all other plans are scheduled around this part of the program.

Children at this age like definite times to do the more routine things but all activities which involve the actual social living of the group continue to be important and must be planned by the group. The group discussions and group plans which help children develop social concepts will now more often center around the problems of the total school. The life of the school should be so planned as to give this age child the maximum opportunities to assume definite school responsibilities thru such purposeful activities as the safety patrol, the student council, and the school assemblies. In some instances the care of the school library, helping in the school office, selling of cafeteria tickets, with the keeping of necessary accounts, provide excellent opportunities for children to render a real service. Assuming this type of responsibility calls for genuine self-discipline.

A child who lives with a group and helps plan what shall be done, feels some responsibility for the life of that group. This feeling of belonging to the group and to the school gives drive and purpose to the things he does each day and should build toward a better concept of the necessity of living well with others in an interdependent world.

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## We Planned It That Way

THIS is a story of one group of ordinary fourth-grade children and an ordinary teacher, who thought things out as they went along. They made mistakes; they had some successes. At the end of this story we will find the children much the same, perhaps with a little different slant about co-operation; and a teacher, who in spite of some bad moments, is sure in her own mind that things work out better if everybody thinks.

Pupil-teacher planning cannot be put into a neat formula of things to be done and not to be done. Often we will find that it is more teacher-planned than pupil-planned and probably, at certain phases, this is a good thing. Nor, is it something to be done at the beginning and at the end of a unit or a month or a semester. Rather, pupil-teacher planning, or "thinking about what we are doing," as we choose to call it, is a part of the day-to-day living of children and teacher. It is the stuff out of which we can make experiences really meaningful. Often, at least in working with children of these ages, the things we plan about and talk about may seem insignificant from the heights of an adult; but to children, they are the real materials of their world. Very seldom will we say, "Now we shall plan," or, "This is a conclusion," or, "This is an evaluation"; but we will be engaged in these activities very really—maybe the big words will come later; we don't care at this point.

### *Straightening Things Out*

We all know that children, and groups of children, will vary widely in ability to read, skip rope, and do the host of other things children should or should not do. Just so with this business of thinking together. To expect perfection in planning to spring full blown from our group of fourth-graders in the first weeks of September is to invite a very beautiful nervous breakdown on ourselves by Christmas. Things don't work out that way. Rather, we must be satisfied with the slow but really satisfactory

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experience of small successes; doing well today in answering one of the questions we are thinking about and tomorrow being able to work out a division of the jobs for the day that really gets things done. And it's not just the children that vary. We teachers, too, are amateurs at this sort of thing, and perhaps several Septembers will have rolled around before we are making the contribution of which we are really capable.

Evaluation, or, as fourth-graders will think of it, "straightening things out," isn't just a "now and then" activity. Each day, often each hour, we will find it necessary to adapt new methods of doing this or that, or postpone things "cause Bill forgot to bring his pictures to school." But if the purposes are common, real, ours, then this kind of wanting to do things better is natural to the thinking of boys and girls, once they have the knack of doing things together.

So, to our little stories. They are not "pupil-teacher planning," rather they are examples of the kinds of things that we can do that will involve pupil-teacher planning.

### *We Tackle a Big Job*

Our group had had several discussions about trips taken at one time or another by members of the group. Several of the children had told about crossing the border into Mexico; others told about parents and friends who had made longer trips in Mexico. Samples of Mexican pottery and tapestry were brought to school and examined. Interest remained general until Gwen reported that her friend who lived in Mexico City had told her that some of the Mexicans did not like the American visitors. There was considerable comment and surprise at this statement; a number of possible reasons were suggested. Interest had been aroused to the point where the suggestion that we learn some facts about Mexico was welcomed. After considerable discussion, the group listed other questions they wanted answered about Mexico.

1. What has happened between Mexicans and Americans that would make Mexicans dislike the American visitors?
2. How do Mexican boys and girls look?
3. What clothes do they wear?
4. What do they eat?
5. Do they have ice cream, candy, and pop?
6. What are their houses like?
7. What work do they do?
8. What games do they play?
9. What songs do they sing?

In this first planning the idea came slowly, resolving itself out of a series of apparently aimless discussions. The teacher allowed the discussion to range over a large field watching and waiting for interest to crystallize.

When a question did arise for which the children were anxious to seek an answer, the teacher found she needed to guide the discussion from unsatisfactory guessing toward an actual desire to seek out facts. The planning of the other questions which would help in understanding the large question was amateurish, yet it seemed advisable to accept the questions as they were given.

The planning that followed the initial blocking out of the questions was largely incidental. Leads were picked up from the daily discussion periods to be followed up by activities. The teacher had placed material on the library table for the children to examine during reading time. The first problem to be discussed was how to look for answers to their questions, for the group had discovered that they could find no direct answers. They decided that as they found material pertaining to their questions they would make a brief note to bring to the next discussion period.

There followed a series of activities which were planned as the ideas occurred.

1. People who had traveled in Mexico were invited to talk about their travels.
2. The art teacher was asked to tell about Mexican pottery and help us make some of our own.
3. Movies of a trip in Mexico were shown by a parent.
4. A large collection of objects from Mexico was acquired which developed into an exhibit to which other rooms were invited.
5. Records of Mexican music were played.
6. The music teacher was asked to help us learn Mexican songs.
7. Children kept lists of Spanish words and phrases, some of which they learned to use.

During this period, the discussions had moved away from the attempt to discuss our questions, and had assumed an opportunistic nature. Interest had begun to lag to such an extent that the teacher suggested that the group check up to see whether the questions had been answered to everyone's satisfaction. Fred complained that he had been able to find nothing that helped him with the first question. Another guessing session began, this time with more understanding for parents had helped with suggestions that involved Mexican history.

Actually the group was over its depth in the attempt to understand a question as broad as the friction between nationalities, yet it seemed to the teacher that some understanding could be achieved. She suggested that knowing some of the things that had happened to Mexicans during their history might help. Here it was necessary to condense much of the information for the group. How deep the understanding went is doubtful, yet some members of the group were able to express opinions about the need to respect a people who had a different way of life from our own.

There was no definite end to this study. Some of the children expressed the opinion that "they were tired of Mexico"; others continued their interest even after the final discussion when it was decided the questions had been answered satisfactorily. Probably more teacher-planning should have been imposed to bring the study to an earlier and more satisfactory conclusion. The teacher felt that the children were beginning to get the "feel" of planning, of deciding for themselves what activities would aid in their understanding. She, herself, was feeling her way, gaining an understanding of how children wanted to plan. Often it was discovered that discussions were too long; the teacher was attempting to force definite plans when the children were wanting to "get to work and quit talking about it." The study was continued beyond the interest of the large bulk of the group; more small group interest should have been encouraged rather than involving the entire group in plans that interested only a few.

### *We Wonder About the World in Which We Live*

Later in the year, the same group of children was indulging in some globe-trotting, finding places they knew on the map, and discovering new things about positions and distances between countries when someone



*Courtesy of Central School, Glencoe, Illinois*

**A committee plans how to explain the solar system to the class**

questioned, "How did the earth get here, anyway?" Suddenly a flood of questions about the earth, sun, and stars came pouring forth. When the discussion cooled down enough to list questions, they took the following form:

1. Where did the earth, sun, and planets come from?
2. How do we know about the planets and stars?
3. How can we measure how far it is to the sun?
4. Do people live on other planets?
5. Could we ever fly to the moon?
6. Why don't we fall off the earth?
7. What makes the earth turn?
8. How did people and animals get on the earth?

In this discussion the process of determining questions for study took less time for the group already had experience in research. As soon as a common interest was discovered, they were able to outline this study quickly.

The first problem to be solved was the question of where to find material. Here the group took the initiative, instead of the teacher. A committee volunteered to visit the school library to bring back all available material for room use; science textbooks were examined by a committee to form a list of helpful books; science magazines and encyclopedias were brought from home. When the question of how to plan the work was discussed, the group decided they wanted a few days to look over the material and do some reading; then they wanted to take up each question separately for discussion.

After a period of incidental planning, other interests were followed as they developed. After the first facts were determined, a strong interest in the various theories about life on other planets appeared. Reading Washburne's book *Of Earth and Sky* led to an excursion into fantasy. Imaginations ran wild and pictures of how men on other planets might look were drawn. The pictures were so weird they demanded explanations, which developed into written stories to accompany the drawings.

There followed a series of small group interests initiated by individual children:

1. One group showed a special interest in the larger constellations and their accompanying myths.
2. Three boys decided to spend time on inventing space ships.
3. Another group made a study of planets and comets.

Finally the teacher called the children together to talk over further plans. Individuals expressed dissatisfaction over the original plan to discuss each question separately. There were complaints about the work dragging out too long and becoming dull.

Both teacher and children realized that they had bitten off too much material at one time. They decided to wind up the material on stars and planets in one big discussion; then divide the work on the beginnings of life on earth into three groups:

1. How life began on earth
2. Development of animals
3. Prehistoric men.

There was less large group planning during this period. When the question of how much time they wanted to spend on the work for the day was settled, the time was turned over to the smaller groups for work on their own interests.

During this time the teacher found she needed to work with the small groups to help them keep their planning of daily activities more definite. When the activities seemed to be reaching a conclusion in each group, they sat down with the teacher to discuss what ideas needed to be presented to the group. Here the teacher needed to suggest ways to present the material which would help make it more interesting. The group planned to discuss each presentation on a different day.

No attempt was made to evaluate or criticize what was done; rather questions were asked by the group and an attitude of enjoyment of each offering was encouraged. At this level it seemed preferable that efforts at evaluation should be engaged in only by the group that did the work. Much of the time such self-criticism came in the form of conversation which one overheard: Jack said, "The animal report was the best one." Jean remarked, "We should have painted our pictures to make them show up better."

### ***There Is More Real Learning This Way***

Throughout this entire study, improvements in planning could be noted. The children showed more purpose in determining their own interests; there was much greater initiative in gathering material; individuals were more ready to take leadership. The group was able to criticize its own planning and voice "complaints" about organization of work. Individuals had begun to feel responsibility for the planning and to suggest ideas themselves. They were beginning to want to "run things their own way." The general discussions still did not stimulate the interest of every person in the group. It is worth noting that the children themselves objected to too much conversation and wanted more time to do things on their own. Even then, the teacher found she needed to keep in close touch with the interest groups to hold their attention to their purpose.

So we come to the end of our little story. Much of what we learned

and much of what the children learned has probably already been forgotten, but each of us will have a little better understanding of what working together and thinking together means.

The inexperience of the children and teacher will be noted. Perhaps too much of the planning was the teacher's. Again, perhaps in some plans the teacher did not carry enough of the responsibility. Our first example illustrates the lack of ability on the part of children or teacher to plan in such a way as to retain interest. In our second attempt some of these mistakes were overcome. We had all grown in our ability to think together. Another time, and in each succeeding situation, we can continue this growth. Most important, however, in all of our work in pupil-teacher planning, was the change in attitude on the part of children toward their own responsibility for learning. Instead of a teacher-imposed, teacher-enforced situation, the children came to see their own responsibility. The change in emphasis here, resulting in a change in attitude, made for greater interest, greater purpose, and thus more real learning. It is to the further achievement of these ideas that we teachers must give increased attention in the next phase of educational development.



*Courtesy of Public School 33, Manhattan, New York*

**Each individual grows as the plan unfolds**

## Good Neighbors and Good Citizens Plan

A CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN is neither new nor original, but this particular project did offer opportunities for various sorts of planning within the school, at home, and in the community surrounding the school.

### *We Begin at School*

For many years it has been a tradition at Whittier School to have a school clean-up day, generally in April and quite often on Arbor Day. In this particular year the matter was first brought up in the student council meeting. (This council is composed of two representatives each from Grades III thru VI, with the principal as counselor.)

The questions for consideration were:

1. When shall we have clean-up day?
2. How shall we decide what each grade will do?

A calendar was produced and the day was quickly decided upon, the date somewhat earlier than usual because of the interest. The second question was more difficult and took much discussion. It was finally decided that a committee consisting of one child from each grade (kindergarten thru sixth) and a teacher should make a survey of the grounds and decide upon jobs needing to be done. The teacher was elected and the children returned to their homerooms to explain the plan and to elect committee members. The first bit of planning was complete—done by the student council.

The next planning was in the committee. A meeting was called by the teacher-elect and a time was set to make the survey of the grounds. During the survey, notes were made by the teacher and older children. These notes and the observations of the younger children were discussed in the meeting which followed and together a plan was formulated. It was decided to make a list of the various "jobs" needed, send the list to each room,

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By JESSIE K. FITZPATRICK, *Principal, Whittier School, Boulder, Colorado*

and allow each class to select its own task, making first, second, and third choices. Preferences were to be recorded in the order received on the office bulletin board—it was to be a case of "first come, first served." After all choices were recorded the list was to be sent to each room so that each group could know its definite work. The second bit of planning was completed—teacher-child committee.

After the list reached the rooms, homeroom planning took place. Here two important questions were discussed:

1. What tools will we need and who will bring them?
2. Which part of the work will each child do?

Definite plans were made and in many cases lists of tools and lists of committees to do various parts of the chosen task appeared upon the blackboards. The third bit of planning was done—homeroom planning.

The council met again to check all details and discovered that one point had been overlooked. We had failed to arrange for the disposal of the trash which would be collected. A committee was appointed to consult the custodian as to his wishes. Thus came about the fourth bit of planning—custodian and children.

The day came, the work went well, and as the children worked and talked some of them conceived the idea of continuing the project with a home clean-up.

### *We Move to the Home Front*

At the next council meeting this new idea—that of a home clean-up—was discussed and the following plans were made:

1. Each homeroom was to be asked to think of the possible things that might be done to improve the appearance of the homes in our district, and to make a list of suggestions to be sent to the council.
2. These lists were to be compiled by the council and sent to each home as a suggestion of possibilities. A note from the council was to go with the lists asking the cooperation of all parents.
3. Each class was to keep a record of work done and report to the council.
4. The duration of this clean-up was to be the following two weeks.

These plans were reported to the homerooms. Teachers and children in each room made lists as had been requested and talked over work which might be done by children at that age level. In some of the grades letters were written by each child asking his parents' cooperation.

The plans suggested by the council were carried out and at the end of the two-week period lists of work accomplished were sent to the council. It was evident that children and parents had done some very fine planning and working. A partial list of the results follows:

## HOME CLEAN-UP

Raked yards	138
Planted flowers or gardens	43
Mowed grass	28
Picked up and hauled away stones and trash	63
Dug dandelions	60
Spaded gardens	27
Cleaned up chicken yards or rabbit hutches	20
Burned trash	50
Pulled old weeds	16
Helped trim trees and shrubs	9
Leveled lawns	2
Cleaned gutters	7
Painted	7
Helped clean houses	47
Helped build fences	8
Cleaned ash pits	5
Helped clean garages	11
Helped clean coal houses	8

This list was mimeographed and was taken home by each child. Child-parent planning was important in this part of the project.

As results of the home clean-up were discussed in homerooms, the fact that there were many unsightly vacant lots in the community near the school was brought up. The children felt that these unsightly spots detracted from the appearance of their cleaned-up homes.

This matter was brought before the council at its next meeting. It was enthusiastically decided to try to do something about it. It was voted to ask one of the teachers to make a map of our district and to ask each grade to select a section of the district as its territory.

The map was made and was sent from grade to grade beginning with the kindergarten. Each grade chose its territory and marked it in crayola on the map.

In homerooms plans were made as to the work to be undertaken. In some cases the whole grade made a trip over its territory to see what might be done. In other rooms committees were appointed to bring in a report. The various pieces of work were finally decided upon but then our troubles began. In several cases we found that the vacant lots chosen belonged to absentee owners. This meant that a committee must visit the assessor and find out the address of the owners. Letters then had to be written asking permission to work on the lots. The end of the year was rapidly approaching and the mails were eagerly watched for the letters which finally came giving the desired permission. Other lots belonged to persons who lived in other parts of the city. Telephone calls brought the permission to clean-up the lots in these cases.

It was the last week of school before all the work was finished. A committee then visited the city manager with the request that the brush, rocks, and debris be collected by the city trucks. This request was granted and the project was highly praised by the city manager.

Some of the values of the project were:

1. Better looking school grounds, homes, and community
2. Experience in various sorts of group planning
  - a. Student council
  - b. Homeroom
  - c. Committees—children and teacher
  - d. Committees—children and custodian
  - e. Committees—children and property owners
  - f. Committees—children and city manager
  - g. Committees—children alone
  - h. Children and parents
  - i. Children and adults in the community who offered to help
3. Experience in letter writing
4. Experience in personal interviews
5. The fun of working together
6. The happy feeling of having completed a useful piece of work
7. A fine baseball diamond on one lot for the use of our boys
8. Interest aroused in the community.

### *Good Neighbor Planning*

During the year 1942-43 we were working hard on all sorts of war activities. In addition to the many things which we were doing for our country we felt that we should also stress the important idea of being good neighbors at home and abroad. Some of this was done thru showing sound movies of children in other lands. A great deal was done thru providing in our library a wealth of reading material on foreign lands, and much was also done thru four particular projects which we worked on as a school.

These projects were:

1. Filling Junior Red Cross boxes to be sent to Brazil
2. At Christmas time making gifts for soldiers and sailors, and providing gifts for the children at the county hospital
3. Planning for an all day celebration of Pan-American Day
4. Planning an international dance and song program for World Friendship Day.

### *Boxes for Brazil*

This project is carried on yearly in our school, as it is in practically all schools thruout our land. In our school our Red Cross council was in charge of the project. This council is composed of one child from each grade, kindergarten thru sixth, and a teacher counselor.

The boxes were brought to the school by our Red Cross representative to the city council—a sixth-grade girl. The council distributed them to the grades with instructions concerning appropriate gifts, and the time when the boxes would be collected.

The council also planned the assembly at which the boxes would be accepted by the sponsor of the Junior Red Cross in our city. The planning was concerned with:

1. The inviting of persons from the Red Cross chapter
2. The arranging of the program
3. The delivering of the boxes to the Red Cross headquarters.

Various committees of children and teachers were appointed to work out the details of the arrangements.

When the grades received their boxes they had several questions to decide:

1. Shall our box be for a boy or a girl?
2. What would this child like to find in the box?
3. Who will purchase these things or who will bring them from home?

When the boxes were filled they were placed on display in the auditorium and the assembly program was held. This program consisted of the



*Courtesy of University School, Ohio State University,  
Columbus, Ohio*

**Planning and growth are continuous**

flag salute, patriotic songs by the school and by the school chorus, a talk by the head of the Boulder chapter of the American Red Cross, and the acceptance of the boxes by the sponsor of the Junior Red Cross.

Later the Red Cross council met to see that the boxes were properly packed and labeled. A committee delivered them to the Red Cross rooms, turning in at the same time the eighteen dollars which we had collected as Junior Red Cross dues.

Planning which functioned in this project was done by:

1. The Junior Red Cross council—seven children and one teacher
2. The homerooms—children of each grade and homeroom teacher
3. The children shoppers—children alone or with mother guides
4. Children and Red Cross representatives with help of the principal.

### *Christmas Cheer for Hospitals*

Our second project in this series had to do with Christmas. This was a twofold undertaking:

1. Providing gifts for soldiers and sailors in the near-by army hospital
2. Providing gifts for the children at the county hospital.

The Junior Red Cross sponsored the first project. We were requested to make bookmarks and writing portfolios for the boys at Fitzsimmons Hospital in Denver. Our Red Cross council received the suggestion and voted to ask the fifth and sixth grades to carry out the project. Children and teachers were consulted and agreed to undertake the work. The fifth grade made one hundred bookmarks and the sixth grade, one hundred writing portfolios. The children were assisted by our art supervisor in the planning and execution of the work. These gifts were delivered by our Red Cross representative early in December.

Following our annual custom of having a "sharing" Christmas the school council planned the second part of the Christmas project. It was decided to find out how many children were in the county hospital, and, if possible, to provide gifts for them. The principal was requested to secure this information.

It was ascertained that there were two very small children and two boys about ten years old at the hospital. This was reported to the council. After much discussion it was planned that, if the grades agreed, the first three grades would provide for the babies, and the upper four for the boys. It was also decided that we would need to collect at least two dollars per room with which to purchase gifts. The matter was referred to homerooms for approval and the plan was enthusiastically adopted.

Planning as to suitable gifts went on in each room. More than twenty dollars was collected. Gifts were purchased by committees of children

and teachers, and on the day before Christmas, several boxes of clothing, books, and toys, a table and two chairs for the tiny ones, baskets of fruit for all in the hospital, and a large Christmas tree were delivered.

The pleasure we had in preparing these gifts made a *real* Christmas for us and convinced us that surely it is "more blessed to give than to receive."

### *Pan-American Day*

In early 1943 affairs were moving at so rapid a rate in the relationships between the Americas that we decided it would be good for both school and community to celebrate Pan-American Day quite extensively.

Most of the first planning for this event was done by the teachers with help from the director of physical education. A morning program, an afternoon program, and an exhibit were planned. The children participated by bringing articles for the exhibit, by assisting in arranging the exhibits, by learning songs from Pan-American countries, and by taking part in Pan-American games. It was an all school activity and an "all home" activity, too, because of the interest of the children in the preparations.

The morning program consisted of three reels of pictures on Mexico taken and shown by Eben Fine, a well-known Boulder lecturer, followed by a group of songs by the Whittier Chorus. After the songs, we adjourned to the playgrounds where the supervisor of physical education directed a series of games played in various countries. The games represented Peru, Alaska, Canada, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico. An explanation of the games was given as the program proceeded. At the close of this part of the program we returned to the auditorium where we saw the lovely color film "Our Neighbors Down the Road." The program closed with a song from each grade, each song representing a different Pan-American country.

In the afternoon we met again in the auditorium where we enjoyed a group of Latin-American songs sung by a chorus brought by their teacher from the Northside Intermediate School; a talk on Salvador; a group of Latin-American dances put on by girls from the University of Colorado; a talk on Guatemala; and a marimba solo by a lad from the University Hill Junior High School. The speakers were both experienced in speaking to children and used many pictures and curios to hold the interest of their audience.

Following the program the guests were invited to visit the exhibit which had been arranged in the library. (The children had all visited the exhibit on the previous day.) Sixth-grade children were in charge of the exhibits and explained them to the visitors. The articles exhibited were loaned by children, teachers, and many Boulder residents who had traveled extensively. There were exhibits from Chile, Colombia, Peru, Salvador, Panama,

Mexico, the West Indies, Brazil, Canada, Venezuela, Trinidad Islands, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Uruguay, and Argentina. The many Pan-American books in the school library were also on display.

### *World Cultures in Song and Dance*

For World Friendship Day we planned an international dance and song program.

The planning for this was done by children, teachers, music supervisor, physical education director, and parents who helped by providing costumes and in dressing children on the day of the program. The auditorium was decorated with American flags and the flags of many nations and presented a colorful setting for the dances and songs. Each grade had planned its part of the program, choosing the countries to be represented.

The dances given were Swedish, Hungarian, Dutch, Chinese, Russian, Old French, and Danish. The songs were from Norway, Hungary, Russia, Switzerland, Germany, Scotland, Italy, and the Netherlands.

Following the series of dances and songs a "Melting Pot Dance" was given bringing together children costumed as Indians, Negroes, Americans, Mexicans, Chinese, and Europeans. The program closed with a song by all, "A Prayer for Peace."

We felt that this series of "good neighbor" projects helped us much in our understanding of the peoples of the world (much reading and studying of pictures, and so forth, was done in planning the songs and dances which isn't mentioned in this report). It helped, too, in developing a feeling of "oneness" in the school as we worked together on these interesting things. The people of the community helped us in many ways and we learned to appreciate their help. We were very conscious by the end of the year that our "neighborhood" began within the school and ended in the uttermost parts of the world.

### *Practical Answers to Practical Questions*

A few years ago our sixth-grade children seemed to be having unusual difficulties with arithmetic and English. In talking it over with the principal one day they said, "What good will these subjects ever do us?" The answer was, "What do you intend to do when you grow up?" Answers came quick and fast. They wished to be aviators, nurses, doctors, teachers, scientists. Then came the question, "Do you suppose you would need to use mathematics and English in your work?"

The group sat down to talk it over. It was decided that each child would talk to some Boulder person working in his chosen field. The principal volunteered to make appointments for each child.

Then came the question, "What will we say?" This was discussed and it was decided that the group would meet again in one week and that, at

that time, each child would bring a list of questions which he would like to ask.

When the day for the second meeting came the children appeared with their questions, which were read and discussed and the following chosen:

1. What sort of a person would you have to be to be successful in this work?
2. Are these things important?
  - a. Accuracy
  - b. Punctuality
  - c. Honesty
  - d. Cleanliness
  - e. Ability to get along with people
  - f. Reliability
  - g. Following instructions
  - h. Hard work
  - i. What else?
3. What courses in school should a student take in order to be successful in this work?
4. How long do you have to be in training?
5. In what grade should you start training?
6. Would these skills be important?
  - a. Reading
  - b. Writing
  - c. Ability to express one's self
  - d. Ability in mathematics
  - e. What else?
7. How much would it cost to take proper training?
8. Does this work pay as good a salary as other work might?
9. Do you still find this work as interesting as when you first started?

A discussion followed as to how such a visit should begin and end. A little dramatization was tried here and we all had a good time in our planning.

Interviews were so arranged that one child went daily and the next day reported on his interview to the class. Interviews were arranged with an air pilot, a nurse, a doctor, a lawyer, an artist, an archeologist, an electric lineman, a forest ranger, a dentist, a teacher, an engineer, a stenographer, a dress designer, a music teacher, and a scientist. Some of these persons granted more than one interview, and in two cases a small group interviewed one person.

The interest in this project continued to the end and the children learned much more than they thought they would. The individuals interviewed were much surprised at the businesslike way in which the children proceeded in the interview and at the questions which the youngsters wished to discuss.

There was, of course, limited value to the project as far as choice of

lifework was concerned for doubtless those eleven-year-olds will have changed their minds many times as the years roll by, but there were many values which we feel were very much worthwhile. Some of these were:

1. A greater interest in scholastic work on the part of the children
2. The development of poise in the children
3. Valuable training in English in the giving of their reports
4. An insight into many interesting occupations
5. Splendid contacts between school and community
6. Interest of parents in the project, leading to an added interest in the school
7. Interest of persons interviewed in the project, leading to an added interest in elementary education
8. Experience in the use of firsthand sources.



*Courtesy of Santa Barbara County, California, Public Schools*

**Reading has meaning when it is part of a group plan  
to find out about our world**

## We Learn on a Bicycle Trip

GROUP planning for life situations provides a splendid opportunity to develop social responsibility and self-discipline in students. This is the considered judgment of forty students and five teacher chaperons of the University School who planned and participated in an eight-day bicycle trip thru southern Ohio during the second week of May 1944.

High-school classes have frequently engaged in travel experiences as a group planned project. The junior class at the University School wanted a travel experience but realized that there would be serious limitations imposed by wartime travel restrictions. Largely on this basis it was decided to plan for an eight-day bicycle trip with overnight stops at various youth hostels in the southern part of the state.

### *Planning Begins*

The planning for the trip was made in the core and social science classes under the direction of the writer who was the core counselor and social science teacher of the group. Interest in the project was created by a movie on hosteling shown at the school in the early part of the winter quarter. After seeing the movie, some of the students asked the core counselor if it might not be possible to have such an experience under the auspices of the University School during the spring quarter. Following discussion of the matter, it was decided to petition the faculty and administration of the school for permission to take such a trip. The students realized that before the faculty could act on such a matter, specific proposals had to be presented in terms of values expected from such a trip, tentative itinerary, parental reaction, and cost. They selected a steering committee which made plans for the preliminary attack on the problem.

Fortunately, one of the students was an experienced hosteler and this

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By ORDEN SMUCKER, Teacher, University School,  
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particular boy played a leading role in the many hours of planning that went into the project, both in committee and general core planning meetings. Before definite proposals could be presented to the faculty it was decided to acquaint the students thoroly with the hosteling movement. This was done thru movies and photographs about hosteling, talks by experienced hostellers, and student reports from the literature of hosteling.

Following ten class periods devoted to this purpose, the group felt ready to make preliminary plans for their own hosteling trip. They had "sounded-out" the administration in regard to the project and were informed that if they could give evidence of thoro planning, the faculty certainly would give consideration to their proposals.

### *Guideposts in Planning*

With the student group now understanding the nature of the hosteling experience and sensing the possibilities of its use as a life experience project for their class, the students discussed anticipated values and set up criteria which would govern their actions in future planning for the trip.

Basic to all criteria was the impact of war which would limit and influence the planning against this background. The following criteria were set up in reference to the proposed trip:

1. The trip should not involve transportation facilities related to the war effort, that is, precious gasoline and overtaxed railway facilities should not be used.
2. Commercialized recreation should be avoided in order that the class might utilize its own ingenuity for self-entertainment.
3. It should be a healthful outdoor experience—good exercise, good food, and plenty of rest.
4. It should be a worthwhile learning experience in which interesting territory is visited.
5. It should be an enjoyable experience. "We want to have fun."
6. Expenditures should be reasonable, preferably under twenty dollars.
7. It should be of such value that our parents will give us permission to go, and in like manner the faculty and administration must be convinced of its value.
8. It should lend itself to cooperative group activity in which every member of the class can participate both in planning and in taking the trip.
9. It should develop both individual and group responsibility.
10. It should provide an opportunity for the members of the class, as well as the faculty advisers, to know each other on a more intimate basis.

With the criteria set up and the preliminary planning out of the way it was necessary to effect an organization, make preliminary plans for the route, and set the date May 6-13. This was in line with the faculty requirement of making definite proposals before permission could be granted for such a project.

### *Committees Go into Action*

The following committees were named:

A general steering committee was selected to give over-all direction and coordination to the planning of the various committees.

A route committee was selected in view of the fact that numerous factors of safety and convenience were necessary in planning for a bicycle trip of this type.

A food committee was needed to plan healthful, well-balanced foods which would be easily cooked on the rather ordinary facilities available at youth hostels.

A bicycle repair committee was set up, not only to inspect the bikes before the trip but to be ready for any accident or emergency breakdowns on the trip.

A first-aid committee was organized to take care of any difficulties in accidents or sickness that might occur.

A recreation committee was formed to plan for unscheduled time, but to allow for sufficient rest and sleep.

A parent contact committee was suggested to arrange for meetings with parents and facilitate complete understanding between parents and school.

A finance committee was formed to set up minimum costs, to collect money before the trip, and to arrange for payment of costs along the trip.

A values committee was formed to keep the group sensitive to the values to be obtained from the trip and to give a broader interpretation to the experience.

Every member of the class was placed on one of these committees and the chairman of each group took the responsibility of informing the class as a whole of the developments and problems to be faced by the class in this project. Final decisions were reached by the vote of the class in reference to committee recommendations.

The class realized that a code of conduct would be necessary for a trip in which many of the usual controls of behavior would be missing. They knew that they would be away from their parents and the school and that it would be necessary to agree on conduct. The class agreed on the following conduct code:

1. All hostel rules to be rigorously adhered to
2. No drinking of alcoholic beverages at any time on the trip
3. No smoking at the hostels
4. Everyone in bed by 10:00 p. m
5. General agreement to conduct one's self in accordance with common sense rules of behavior
6. A constant concern for personal and group safety should be displayed
7. In case of disagreement, counselor's decision to be final
8. Serious violation of any portion of the code of conduct will warrant sending home the individual so involved.

Since most hostels cannot accommodate more than about fifteen guests, it was decided tentatively to have two bicycle trips going over the same route in opposite directions thru the southern part of Ohio. The trips were routed thru a very scenic portion of the state in the vicinity of the Hocking County state forests, Old Man's Cave, Cantwell Cliffs, Conkle's Hollow, Ash Cave, Rockhouse, Fort Hill, and other places of historic interest and natural beauty.

### **Getting the "Go" Sign**

It was now possible to make definite proposals to the administration and faculty, who after some discussion and debate gave the go sign. Now with the trip only about a month away, the group set itself to the task of planning for the countless specific details, the general spade work having been completed.

The students were enthusiastic, the faculty had given its permission, but how about the parents? Many parents were dubious about the value of such an enterprise and others were concerned as to the ability of their youngsters to withstand the rigors of an extended bicycle trip thru the hills of southern Ohio. Some parents gave an outright "no" to their child's request to go, while others expressed a desire to know more about it before judgment was passed.

It was decided to call a parent meeting about three weeks before the trip so that the student committee and the counselor could explain the various details of the trip. The students prepared a letter explaining the hostel trip, indicating the route to be followed, and the equipment to be taken. The counselor enclosed a note inviting the parents to the meeting in order that the school and the parents could reach complete agreement on the activity. The letter prepared by the students follows:

April 12, 1944

#### **Parents of the Junior Class:**

This year the eleventh grade is planning a youth hostel trip, May 6-13. This consists of traveling by bicycle or on foot as cheaply as possible while enjoying the pleasures of outdoor living. Hosteling (biking or hiking from hostel to hostel) is really more like camping out than going to a summer resort. You are on your own, rustle your own supplies, cook your own meals, and tidy the bunk rooms.

A hostel is a simple, overnight shelter, a school, converted barn, or farm house. Every hostel has house parents who see to the welfare of the hostellers while staying there overnight. One may stop en route for a mid-day snack but the hostels provide only stoves, good water, and cooking facilities. Farm produce and groceries usually are purchasable near by.

We should like our trip to include Lancaster, New Marshfield, Rock House, Kingston, Fort Hill, back to Kingston, and then to Columbus. The speed of hosteling travel is determined by the pace of the slowest rider.

The longest day's ride is not more than forty-five miles which can easily be done at a leisurely pace. We shall probably have difficulty in obtaining rationed foods; therefore, a few ration points may be needed.

This trip has been organized during the eleventh-grade core class in which everyone has participated. We have set up many different committees, such as planning of meals, first-aid, bike repair, parent contact, route, and chaperons. Accompanying us on our trip will be four chaperons, all of whom have been chosen from our school faculty. For the convenience of the hostels we will divide our group into several smaller ones, each containing about fourteen people. Each group shall have two chaperons.

Due to the fact that we are missing a week of school, we feel that we should attain certain values from this trip. Basic to all values, we shall learn to cooperate with each other and share and carry out responsibilities. The trip will introduce us to healthful outdoor living while learning about the country and having many new experiences.

(Signed) RUTH SPENCER

DICK LOVE

*Representatives of the Junior Class*

Growing out of the parent meeting came a demand for a third trip designed to satisfy those parents who felt that an eight-day bicycle trip would be an activity of too strenuous a nature for their children. On the basis of this demand, not anticipated by the students, a less strenuous hiking trip was arranged for in addition to the two bicycle trips. Under this plan the students would take a bus to a point about ten miles from a hostel deep in the southern Ohio hills. These students would stay at the hostel for three successive nights and would hike daily to the various points of interest in the area.

After this plan was presented practically every student in the class signed up to go on one of the bicycle trips or on the hiking trip. All of the routes were outlined on the board and the students gained such familiarity with them that they came to be designated as Trip 1, Trip 2, and Trip 3. This facilitated the planning.

The groups were selected on the basis of the students' choices with some adjustments made when any one group became too large. After the groups were selected, core meetings were broken down into these subgroupings during which plans were made in terms of the immediate group needs. Previous plans were more general—now each unit made specific plans with every individual receiving an assignment of responsibility.

During the last two core meetings before the trip, the groups were called together so all could receive final instructions. The code of conduct agreed on by the students was again emphasized, and as a final measure the students agreed that as a sanction against misconduct the counselor should be empowered to send any student home who violated the code.

### *Group Goals Get Priority*

The trips were thoroly enjoyed and with a few minor exceptions there was manifested a splendid spirit of cooperation and attention to the concerns of the group. Here was a situation in which the basic physical needs could be provided for only by group action.

Meal preparation required cooperative effort on the part of every individual. Purchasing of the food, building the fire, preparation of the food, and cleaning up required work on the part of every person. If even one shirked his duty the group would suffer. This seldom happened because there was too much at stake.

The bicycle repair committee was kept busy keeping the bikes in shape for the next jaunt, and repairing punctures and blowouts along the way.

The first-aid committee took care of the minor scratches and bruises and advised a course of action in one or two more serious mishaps.

When the youngsters arrived at the hostel it was necessary for the leaders to make necessary arrangements with the house parents. Sometimes the facilities were inadequate for sleeping and the boys were required to exercise their best ingenuity in meeting the situation. In one hostel where there were not enough beds, a plan of action had to be decided on. In this case several of the boys agreed to sleep in the barn. The other members of the party assisted in making the boys as comfortable as possible in the makeshift arrangement.

Several of the students developed sore muscles from the strenuous exertions involved in the long rides. Some of the athletes along on the trip knew how to give massages which gave comfort to aching muscles.

In one instance where one of the girls pulled a muscle from too much exertion, two of the boys attached a rope to the girl's bicycle and towed her to a hostel ahead of the trip where she could rest and recuperate until the group would catch up again. This involved about thirty-five extra miles of riding for the boys, which they gladly did.

Then there was the matter of what to do with the unscheduled time since on two occasions there were stopovers. This required discussion by the boys and girls with necessity for reaching agreement on the proposed plan of action.

There were many group decisions needed. For example: What time should they start in the morning? Which of the alternative routes should be taken? Should they take time off from the trip for a swim? There were numerous similar problems requiring concerted action.

After the day's activities were all over groups frequently gathered in the evening around a campfire or in one of the bunkrooms to tell stories, sing songs, and generally enjoy each other on a basis of good fellowship.

With the strenuous physical activity of the day it did not take much urging to get the youngsters to bed.

There was, of course, the usual fund of amusing incidents which have been told and retold and now constitute sort of a trip folklore. There was the story about the farmer's dogs eating two dozen hamburger sandwiches the girls had prepared for supper, and the freak accident in which one of the boys broke both pedals off of his bike at the same time.

There was a contagious spirit of enthusiasm and the youngsters showed a responsibility for the group at all times. There were a few, however, who did not live up to expectations and showed evidences of irritability under the strain of the long rides.

On the Monday following the trip, a group of enthusiastic, well-tanned, healthy looking youngsters descended on the University School joyously telling of their experiences.

### *What It Meant to the Youngsters*

Several core periods were devoted to the evaluation of the trip. Each of the three groups was given an opportunity to tell trip highlights preliminary to the general evaluation. Panel groups were used for this purpose. Following this, the trip was evaluated on the basis of the following criteria: how the plans worked out; the values received from the trip; the shortcomings of the trip; suggestions for improvement; suggestions for future hostellers. This was done by discussion followed by papers submitted by the students. A student committee synthesized the various individual reports, and many values were listed all of which relate to social responsibility. Typical student comments evaluating both the planning and the experiencing of the project were:

The values of our youth hostel experience started when we first began to plan. The planning, at first, was rather unorganized and sketchy. Then the group saw the necessity for breaking up into smaller groups to plan for the more specific responsibilities. The committee work gave responsibilities to many people who had not previously taken part in the group activities of the class. This was very valuable to them.

\* \* \*

On the trip we learned to adjust our plans to the changing situations. For instance, the first night of cooking showed our system to be unsatisfactory. There was too much individual action. We learned quickly that the most efficient method was to take turns at such jobs and do them all at once. Such instances kept coming up and as time went on we found our group becoming more cooperative and efficient.

\* \* \*

I think that our group received three principal values: learning to live together, learning to work cooperatively, and learning to plan together. Our class has been rather weak on the last point but when one's welfare really depends on the efficiency of the planning then it's different.

We learned that while in group traveling under your own power you must all pitch in and cooperate to the best of your ability. Hosteling taught us how to provide for the many comforts which are taken for granted at home. Too, we were required to impose on ourselves the agreed-upon rules of the group.

\* \* \*

The single value that impressed me most was the interesting problem of living together in an intimate situation. It still amazes me when I recall the hidden characteristics that came out in people under strain—some gave only further evidence of their worthiness, while others gave way to temper or cracked completely.

\* \* \*

The desolate, deserted coal areas around New Marshfield brought back to me the old story of depleted resources and unemployment—learning that many of our food plans were impractical, as foods obtainable in the city were unheard of in the country, and we had trouble figuring out how much of what food was necessary.

\* \* \*

These are the values I received: I learned how to get along with people better; I learned responsibility; I expanded my scope of friends; I got some good exercise.

\* \* \*

Probably the most important value for me was the experience of cooperation that made the trip so successful. I learned more about the individuals I have been living with at school for the past three years and was surprised at how little I knew about them.

In addition each of the six counselors made an over-all evaluation of the trip and the behavior of each individual on the trip.

On the basis of the counselors' and students' evaluations and the core discussions, the trips should perhaps be considered as an outstanding success. This does not overlook the fact that there were shortcomings and difficulties.

The project made an ideal planning situation in that the students were all so vitally interested and it provided an opportunity for the youngsters to check the plans against their actual fruition in a life experience. Altho we by no means limit group planning to the life activity experiences of students, we find that this type of educational experience is very meaningful to young people. There is a realism, a power, a vigor that no teacher can afford to overlook.

When the student realizes that the group concerns are his concerns and that failure of the group process will reflect on him and affect his own well-being, he comes into a sense of social responsibility and self-discipline. The life activity planning develops in the individual a feeling that it really matters.

This is not to disparage student activity on the intellectual front. We need this too, but there is a traditional overemphasis on the accumulation

of book facts. We need to bring into common focus the critical intellectual processes and intelligent actions in the pupil's own life.

Group planning does bring a sense of social responsibility. The student has a stake in the outcomes and he develops a concern for the realization of the common goals in a manner that cannot be duplicated by autocratic imposition or the rote-memory emphasis of traditional education.



## Learning to Take Responsibility

DURING the first years of the New School,<sup>1</sup> the staff and the students thought and talked a great deal about freedom. Gradually we began to see that true freedom cannot be given; it cannot be bestowed or bequeathed. Any attempt to hand it down must fail, as its end product then becomes special privilege, license, too often anarchy. We have come to believe that freedom must be *achieved*.

For example: When a little child learns to feed himself and later when he learns to dress himself, he has freed himself from the necessity of having other people help him do these things. He has assumed responsibility; he has achieved freedom. In the same way, when young people have learned to conduct their class, they have freed themselves of the need for a teacher in his usual capacity. Such a group has acquired freedom to the degree that the various members have assumed responsibility.

### *Let Us Explore*

At the present time, our staff is spending much time thinking about ways by which we can induce young people to accept and discharge responsibilities and by which we can get a group to demand responsibility on the part of their leaders. By *leaders* we mean the student who is in charge of the bulletin board or of tomorrow's discussion on current events quite as much as we mean regularly elected officers.

Several years ago our staff was exploring this question during an evening discussion. Someone pointed out that many of our young people do accept responsibility quite beyond what one would ordinarily find in the traditional schools of yesterday. We recognized, too, that our young people accepted social tasks and discharged them quite as conscientiously

<sup>1</sup> The New School, an experimental division of Evanston Township High School, was opened September, 1937. For further description of its program, philosophy, and educational outlook see: MacConnell, Melby, Arndt. *New Schools for a New Culture*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943.

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By CHARLES M. MACCONNELL, *Executive Officer, New School,  
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as do adults. Yet, as in adult groups, the failure of students to be responsible is a disquieting spectacle. We were confronted with the realization that, unless our young people of today learn to take more social initiative and more social responsibility, our bright new world will not come into being as rapidly as we have hoped.

It was at this point in our thinking that one of our members suggested that perhaps part of our difficulty was due to the fact that responsibilities were assigned so indefinitely and at times so haphazardly that neither the individual nor the group knew who was responsible for what. Then this further thought evolved: Seldom are plans ever thought thru to completion. It is reasonably easy to get the school gymnasium decorated for the Halloween dance, but usually no provision is made for the disposal of the corn stalks, the resale of the cider that is left, and the general cleaning up, not only of the gymnasium, but also the items of business that require attention.

Most committees find no difficulty in planning a school party, but seldom do they anticipate what should be done if Bob Marshall fails to collect and bring the properties required by a student dramatic skit. And if Bob should fail in his responsibility, seldom does he have to answer directly to the group or the committee. Perhaps, at the moment, some exasperated girl might say, "Bob, how could you be so stupid?" but beyond this he usually experiences little disapproval unless he happens to have a troublesome conscience. In much the same way classroom groups plan areas of study and assign the parts to individuals without thinking thru what should be done about people who fail their assignments thru absence or in other ways.

### *We Plan a Party*

Our clarified concept of definite assignments of responsibility and of planning a project thru to its completion was shared by the staff with the general student body and was discussed at some length with the student council. The student council decided to try to follow thru on these ideas in the planning of the harvest home party, which is an annual school affair. The eleven members of the council called for volunteers to help on various parts of the program. More than twenty-five people worked in preparation for the affair. Each part of the program was delegated to one or several people. The allocation of responsibility for the various aspects of the party was specific, and it included taking down the decorations, cleaning up the hall, returning all properties, and paying the bills.

It was further planned that in a few days after the party was over, an evaluation meeting would be called that would include everyone who had been in any way responsible for it. Such a meeting was called. The good features of the party were cited and difficulties were reviewed, and an

effort was made to discover how the latter could be avoided in the future. People who had carried out their responsibilities with distinction were commended. At least two were asked to account for lapses of duty. Jim Balderson, who had been responsible for the collection of various small games, had been ill before the party. The afternoon of the party it occurred to somebody that Jim was not going to be there; so Chuck Hughes was asked to gather up some games. He was able to gather a few, but his notice was much too short. This is the sort of inquisition that Jim faced at the evaluation session:

CHAIRMAN GALT: Jim, do you realize that we had less than a half-dozen games at the party the other night? Wasn't it your responsibility to see to that?

JIM: Yes, but I couldn't because I was sick. I was out of school two weeks before the party.

CHAIRMAN: But it was still your responsibility, wasn't it?

JIM: You certainly didn't expect me to get up out of a sickbed and go around the community hunting up checkerboards and pin ball machines.

MARY: Don't be silly, Jim; you know better than that. But when you were first sure that you could not do your job, you should have called up the school office and left a message for us to get someone else to take your place.

BOB: Or you could have called one of your friends or spoken to some of the boys who came to see you while you were sick and had them take over your job, with the permission of the committee, of course.

JIM: It seems to me that everybody knew that I was out of school and wouldn't be able to get the games.

CHAIRMAN: Perhaps I had some responsibility in the matter, but even so, it was your responsibility and your work. I couldn't be sure but what you had taken care of the matter or that you meant to return a day or so before the party.

DICK: I think this shows us two things. First, that nothing short of prolonged unconsciousness should excuse anyone from seeing to it that a responsibility is carried thru and, second, that someone on the committee should be the designated checker-upper to see Tom, Dick, and Harry a day or so before the party to find out if Harry, Dick, and Tom have been doing the job each was assigned.

Another case was that of Ann Tucker, a council member, who had been given the task of seeing that the coke stand was properly manned. Ann had left the assignment to a couple of her friends, and they in turn passed it on to people less responsible. It was general knowledge that at several times during the evening the stand had no attendants. Nothing untoward happened, but this lapse from duty was recognized as something that shouldn't have happened, and all participants were called in for an accounting.

### *We Include the Classroom*

After this party, we moved very slowly toward specificity in the assignment of responsibility, and we have tried to plan "clear thru until all the dishes are washed and the place is put back just as it was," as one student figuratively expressed it. While the planning of parties, trips, and various affairs, not directly connected with the classroom, offers unusual educational opportunities for learning the ways of democratic living, particularly the development of individual and social responsibility, it should be noted that the same practices of planning outlined above can be used in the classroom.

Only a few weeks ago, one of our senior groups called its program committee to task after the first week's program had been lived thru. The committee had made an excellent calendar for the two ensuing weeks, including such features as a talk on reading skills, reports on outside reading, current events, and a number of reports. The reports had been definitely assigned to certain students, but the remainder of the calendar was less definite. These questions were raised: Who has charge of the current events? Exactly what are we going to do that day? What is the part of each student? What is the purpose of the program? It was discovered that the reading expert who was scheduled to talk had not been



*Courtesy of Leighton School, Tennessee Valley Authority*

**Building a pig house needs planning  
and uses various skills**

approached because that responsibility had not been given definitely to any one person. The reports on outside reading were scheduled, but nothing further had been planned concerning them. No one knew who was in charge of that period or what would be done. After a good deal of discussion and many suggestions, the programs were made definite, and individual responsibilities were allocated.

Of course evaluation must come after a project has been completed. Parenthetically, I think we should say that young people get very much fed up on constant evaluation. Evaluation, of course, is not an end in itself, and when an individual or a group insists on evaluating everything that is done, this persistence will become tiresome. The main point about evaluation, by whatever name it is called, is that values and performances should be examined from time to time, and individuals should be held accountable for the tasks that they have assumed.

### *Young Children Can Plan*

It is an educational tragedy that so many of our pupils come to us quite unacquainted with the ideas of cooperative planning and the joy of responsibility accepted and discharged. Children can be brought up from their earliest years in the democratic pattern. For the last two years Dorothy Helling and Edna Lehman have demonstrated to other teachers that small children can plan cooperatively and can discharge responsibility in a way that is quite astounding to most adults.<sup>2</sup> A single example is the case of Mrs. Helling's first-graders, who decided they wanted a picnic. The general aspects were talked over—where and what day it could be held, what were some of the things necessary to think about.

After these youngsters had agreed to have the picnic in a near-by park on a certain Tuesday, a week away, the children got down to more minute planning. They decided that they wanted to make cookies to eat as a part of their lunch. A check list of what was needed was made. This list included such items as two sizes of bowls and of mixing spoons, an egg beater, a flour sifter, a measuring cup, and other equipment. Each child volunteered to bring one or more of the items needed. The class very seriously talked over this responsibility: If John failed to bring his flour sifter or Mary the egg beater, the cookies just wouldn't be made, and everyone would be disappointed. The youngsters also worked out other details of the picnic by the same sort of cooperative planning. On the day set aside for cooky-making, every single bit of equipment arrived in spite of the fact that no notes to mother had been pinned to any child's clothing.

<sup>2</sup> Kindergarten and first- and second-grade demonstration classes conducted at Nichols School, Evanston, as a part of Northwestern Summer Workshop, summers 1943 and 1944.

From here on the group worked in committees. One group prepared the cookies, and a smaller group took them to the school kitchen for baking; another group went to the store to buy sandwich bread, peanut butter, and jelly for filling material. Milk was bought on the way to the park, so that it would be cold. Much learning seemed to evolve out of this rather extended planning. Each child tried to guess how many pieces of bread were contained in a sandwich loaf. The guesses showed the children themselves that they had no idea of the number of slices in precut bread. One little girl counted the pieces at home and reported the next day. The next problem was: "If it takes two pieces of bread for each sandwich, how many pieces will it take to feed the group?" The children figured out that they would need two loaves. Milk was to be drunk from paper cups. One of these cups was used as a measure to discover how many cups could be poured from a quart. Then, of course, a good deal of arithmetic was used in the purchase of food.

To visitors of this demonstration school the amazing thing about these two groups of children was not so much that they planned their activities, but rather that at the end of the day they talked over how much they had accomplished, where they had failed to carry out their plans, whether the failure was the result of the inclusion of something more important, of school interruptions, or other reasons. Not infrequently they decided that they "just hadn't played ball" as they should that day. Hence, since they recognized that both success and failure contributed to their learning, the word *failure* was largely stripped of its terrors.

### *We Look Further*

Sky Lake camps for boys and girls,<sup>3</sup> which are located in the mountains of northeastern Georgia, have developed independently much the same ideas concerning what constitutes good training in democratic living as those developed in the New School. The camp program is one of activity rather than of academic experiences. Further, these experiences are posed in the realistic frame of problems presented in every phase of the child's environment. For these reasons the learning situation is probably more realistic, more sanely educative, than the training usually offered by schools. It is the Sky Lake way to plan, to allocate responsibility, and then to project, to do. After an activity is completed, what has been done or what has been left undone is talked over, if that seems necessary. The participants are commended if they have done a good job, or they are asked to account for any failures to carry thru responsibility.

Of course, many of the new campers come with little idea of how to fit

<sup>3</sup> Camp Sky Lake, Sautee, Georgia. J. J. Brooks, director.

into such a program, and eight weeks is a very short time. However, camping is a twenty-four-hour-a-day activity, so that it is possible for a number of campers to develop quite as much in a camping season as they might in a full year of school. Many schoolmen all over America are examining the programs of summer camps, farm schools, and similar undertakings to see how such realistic, actual life settings can be utilized in public education.

### *We Come to a Conclusion*

We must fairly state that we have not here developed a guide sheet that shows how people and groups can be trained to accept responsibility for their own affairs. Educational programs committed to teacher-student planning have crept a little toward a solution of this problem, but we have long hard days ahead of us, if we are ever to learn to walk erect—perhaps some day to run.

Of this much we are fairly certain:

1. We must learn to plan all our projects clear thru "until the dishes are washed and the place is put back just as it was."
2. We must teach people that individuals and groups must hold their leaders strictly and publicly accountable for the responsibilities that they assume. The leaders, of course, steeped in the same training, must hold their helpers to the same sort of accountability.
3. We must learn to assign responsibility so definitely and explicitly that no one is in doubt as to the specific tasks that each one must complete.
4. When projects are completed (and if necessary during their progress) they should be evaluated. Care should be taken that this process does not become a stereotyped, boresome task that must be done whether we want to do it or not. Rather we should make the approach of "Let's talk this thing over to see where we have succeeded and where we have failed, so that we'll do a better job the next time."
5. Finally: The participants in teacher-student planning develop a sense of responsibility best when they operate in realistic setting that embodies the necessities of day-to-day living.



## We Plan Our Own Affairs

**N**EW TRIER has four major student organizations which work together in harmony—a student council, a boys' club called the Tri-Ship Club to which all boys in school belong, the girls' club to which all girls belong, and the girls' athletic association. While there are many other special interest clubs, these four organizations influence the school life of every student at New Trier. They are organized by thoroughly democratic procedures with executive groups and adviser room representatives.

The boys and girls who form the working committees of these organizations know and respect the fact that they have wide powers and that the faculty and administration give serious and immediate attention to their ideas and suggestions. All New Trier organizations have faculty sponsors who are present at meetings, give advice when asked, work hand in hand with the students, and are appreciated by the students, but these sponsors are thorough disciples of the philosophy that they are helpers. The organizations are for the students, not for the sponsors.

### *Students Plan thru a Council*

The student council meets before school opens in order to plan the budget for financing extracurricular activities. This was done last spring for the current year, and the plan was submitted to and approved by the board of education since the board would be asked to underwrite certain expenditures. The council at that time met with representatives of every organization supported by the budget to plan the financial policy of the year.

A large part of this budget is met by the sale of a year's activity ticket, which, incidentally, grew out of student request and student planning. The council maps a campaign for the immediate sale of activity tickets, and before school opens plans assemblies. When the assemblies include

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skits, these are written and rehearsed during the summer. Thus over a period of years this one budget planning activity of the student council has grown out of a series of procedural steps:

1. Discussion of need for unified control and planning of activities' budget.
2. Plans presented and discussed with all organizations supported by activity funds.
3. Discussions of need for student activity ticket. Assemblies to present ideas to student body and forums for discussion.
4. Student activity ticket idea presented to board and their aid enlisted to underwrite the project.
5. Sales campaign to make the use of activity tickets as nearly 100 percent as possible.
6. Yearly restudy and improvement of mechanics of making and handling the budget and of selling the activity tickets and collecting money for them.

This is a real problem—one that concerns the pupil and one that gives him the opportunity to do a better job, with help and advice, than could a faculty group working alone.

Another illustration from the field of council work pertains to study halls. Thirteen years ago they were problems at New Trier to students and faculty alike. The first move to improve the study period came from a faculty member who told a responsible group of seniors that he thought it beneath his dignity and theirs, too, that he should sit for an hour to see that they did something that was supposed to be a privilege—namely, get an education. A small group asked to be assigned to a free room that period and run their own study period. Today nearly half the school, that is, upward of one thousand students, are in self-governing study halls which work successfully.

The project is entirely under the student council. Here are some of the highlights of how the students carry out the program:

1. In the spring the council discusses the basis on which students shall be selected for honor study halls. They have tried several schemes—such as (a) by application plus advisers' recommendations, (b) by recommendation only, (c) by entire classes.
2. The council elects the head officer to be in charge of study halls, and this is usually a student who has filled a responsible committee position on study halls the previous year.
3. The student supervisors are selected (some years by election from the study hall, some years by appointment from council).
4. In the fall the council holds an assembly of all students in honor study halls and reviews with them the history of honor study halls at New Trier, the purpose of honor study halls, and the mechanics of operating them.

5. Chairmen of study halls hold meetings with student supervisors to instruct them on procedures of attendance, excuses, and similar matters. Note: The first ten days of the year a faculty member is assigned to every honor study hall to help in organization. After ten days the hall runs itself for the rest of the year. Three study halls seating one hundred pupils each are run as honor study halls every period. Four similar study halls still are under faculty control.

### *The Boys' Club Finds Work To Do*

Long before New Trier had a council, it had a boys' club and a girls' club to handle social and service problems. These organizations exist now side by side with council. The boys' club, known as the Tri-Ship Club, has charge of committees concerned with such matters of pupil interest as the following:

Student aid	Information desk corps
Social dances	Traffic squad
Usher corps	Hall guards
Cheerleader squad	Dinner committee
Service register	Interscholastic relations
Club room	Library monitors
Public relations	"Lagniappe"—This is the between-semesters student talent show. It and the dances are the sources of revenue for Tri-Ship.
Scrap drive	
Attendance collectors	

The sponsor gives the following account of their work:

The service phases of the boys' club are varied and extensive. By planning and carrying out a large number of activities directly connected with the administrative functions of the school these boys actually share in the planning necessary to the smooth running of a large high school. These groups are not limited to a small number of the senior boys but reach a large group from all classes.

The usher corps is responsible for handling the crowds at all school affairs and at many community gatherings. This group works at about seventy-five functions each school year, averaging almost two a week. The traffic squad operates along lines similar to those of the usher corps. This work has three parts: (a) handling auto traffic before and after school and at all school affairs; (b) controlling students after school at the interurban station; (c) helping with all similar problems. These boys work in cooperation with the police department.

The information desk boys are seniors who first greet and direct visitors to the school, and carry such administrative messages as may be necessary. Library monitors are juniors who assist the librarians with the handling of students who come to the library each period. This group of juniors checks the attendance, reports this to the study halls, and sees that blacklisted students don't come in.

A group that receives little publicity but is an extremely valuable asset in many ways consists of the senior boys who assist the freshman boys'

advisers. These senior boys are selected by the boys' club sponsor and freshman adviser chairman. They are assigned, usually one each, to help the freshman boys' advisers get their groups organized and going. This not only pertains to school routine matters but some personal problems. They remain as long during the school year as the adviser wishes. In most cases this is for an entire year.

### *Girls Activities Center in Club of Their Own*

The New Trier girls' club operates somewhat like the boys' club but its activities differ. The girls plan their year's program around social functions for the benefit of New Trier girls, raise funds to help girls go to college, run an employment office and supply "sitters" in great number in the community, and usually undertake one big unique project a year. Last year it was buying an ambulance for the Army. Their father-daughter and mother-daughter banquets, paralleling the boys' father-son and mother-son banquets, become high points of the year. Their funds come from sales of hot dogs at football games, a magazine drive, and every second year a mammoth bazaar. Their planning centers partly around their annual activities, and partly around the needs of the girl population of the school in any particular year.

While operating in a more limited field, the girls' athletic association is important because it presents a fine example of student planning and acceptance of responsibility. "The Girls' Athletic Association," reads the



*Courtesy of Burt Upjohn, Kalamazoo, Michigan*

### **The Fourth R—Relationships**

manual of the girls' physical education department, "was established by the Department of Physical Education in the belief that after-school activities should belong to the girls themselves and that they gain valuable knowledge through an opportunity to experience responsibility and leadership in their own activities."

In so far as possible, the department of physical education permits the G. A. A. to organize and administer the intramural sports program. The department furnishes instructors for the sports, facilities, and equipment. The instructors act as advisers to the students who are placed in positions of authority. In a school like New Trier where, in addition to the gymnasium classes, hundreds of girls are out for afternoon sports, this is a tremendous undertaking.

The G. A. A. board meets every day during the last period in order that plans will be ready for the afternoon. In addition to all the administrative officers there are leaders for the following sports: archery, lacrosse, baseball, hockey, speedball, basketball, golf, riding, tennis, swimming, volleyball, rhythms, recreational games, square dancing, and victory corps activities.

Each year officers leave detailed accounts of their year's work to aid incoming officers. These sentences culled from their various reports give evidence of the emphasis on planning:

Your hardest work and biggest time of crisis come before the season and not during it.

Get your executive board together, talk to each member, and plan out her year's work with her in a general way from the last report on that office.

For this meeting you'll have to start planning two weeks ahead—and the more time you allow yourself the better.

Don't try to do all the work yourself. Make general plans and then work out details with your committee.

A genuine leader secures the cooperative effort of her group to determine what the girls can do and how they will do it.

Stimulate the creative ability of individuals together with the desire to work for the good of the group.

Plan clearly, foresee what will happen, utilize the leadership of others. Modify plans quickly to meet existing conditions.

### ***Youngsters Speak Their Mind on Citizenship***

A last illustration of student-planned activity is chosen from the field of ideas about conduct and citizenship. Our students became concerned about the problem of juvenile delinquency and about the students in our own school who failed to measure up as good citizens. The Tri-Ship Club, after many meetings and discussions, issued a statement from which the following is taken:

## THE QUESTION OF CITIZENSHIP

I. We find it desirable to explore thoroly the question of citizenship as applied to New Trier for the following reasons:

1. The school is directly responsible for much of the student's time—hence the necessity of a school program to educate and develop within the student the basic principles of citizenship.
2. Mr. Gaffney's letter concerning the inclusion of citizenship in the New Trier diploma and the series of incidents leading up to it have accentuated this problem.
3. The student body of New Trier should be aware of the fact that they have just as much a responsibility as the next person, as citizens of New Trier, to help alleviate the qualities of negative citizenship that have been so emphasized by the war.
4. The majority of our student body of New Trier have no immediate responsibilities, except to themselves. "The devil finds work for idle hands."
5. Due to present conditions the attitude of "eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die," a type of war hysteria, has evolved.
6. We feel a sense of civic responsibility to promote an intelligent participation in a democratic society.

II. In considering the question of citizenship, after lengthy discussion and research, we have adopted as a fundamental basis for further study the report of the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education: In addition to the provisions of the American Youth Commission, we have found it necessary to add a third level of citizenship to the two types discussed by the commission. At this point we will enlarge on all three types of citizenship, beginning with the lower level, that of the detrimental type, which we have added.

A. The detrimental type

The detrimental types are those students who are destructive and negative in their citizenship. This means they refuse to assume responsibility and a civic interest. We have listed a few outstanding examples of this type below.

1. Those out for sports who refuse to conform to training rules.
2. The habitual and occasional show-offs, whose plays for attention result in destruction of material and property.
3. Those nonconformists who consistently break school regulations, such as cheating and falsifying schoolwork.

B. The conforming type

The conforming citizen is a person who has taken an interest in himself, in people, and in the world as a whole, to the extent that he has formed a personal philosophy of life in general and his place in the set-up of the world. This so-called "self-invented philosophy" consists of knowing right from wrong, being able to throw off certain desires, recognizing their dangers; finding one's "place in the sun" and making something of it; cultivating one's personal hobbies and interests; exploring certain fields, thereby increasing one's intelligence; doing things that aid both physically and mentally; having an eagerness to assume a job from which one can develop qualities such as leadership and responsibility as well as intelligence.

C. The contributing type

The requirements of contributing citizenship include all the requirements of conforming citizenship with special emphasis placed on the participation in

extracurriculum activities, which will not only benefit himself but will be a benefit to the rest of society.

One of the basic differences between the conforming and contributing types of citizens is that, while the conformist recognizes the existence of detrimental elements in the school life and school activity and tolerates this, the contributor takes steps to remedy and correct these pernicious influences.

After some discussion it was decided not to attack the problem of citizenship frontally but in an indirect way. Having assemblies, drives, and compulsory reading for all students would only defeat the whole purpose of improving the general level of citizenship. Instead, it was felt the emphasis should be placed on the development of citizenship from within the individual. This might take time, but when it starts taking hold the benefits will be lasting. To build up in the student body a tradition of civic responsibility that will in turn build up the school is the ideal goal. A plan like this can be accomplished only by a gradual indoctrination or exposure of the student body to the principles set forth in this chapter.

To this end two ideas have been suggested:

1. Expansion of the method of using senior boys to help in the freshman adviser rooms.

For the past few years a senior boy has been in each freshman adviser room for part of the first semester, carrying out routine jobs such as reading the bulletin, explaining club notices, and being of general aid to the adviser. In addition to these jobs the senior could do much to help with the citizenship problem. The senior, being a prominent upperclassman, is the idol of the incoming freshman boys. The older boy in this position can do a great deal to implant and cultivate in the group or individual the ideals of good citizenship. The senior, nearer the age and more like the younger boys than the adviser, can be closer to them. Thus the upperclassman can more easily learn the troubles of a delinquent freshman, and a few helpful and encouraging words from the admired senior can do more than many words from an adviser to impress and direct the boy.

2. A student rehabilitation program by which selected senior boys may assist the dean and adviser-chairmen in helping students fit into the life of the school and community.

This is a supervisory program in which boys may be guided by other boys who have earned a position of respect and importance in the school.

We have not attempted to discuss all organizations in which student planning takes place but merely to give selected examples. We know that similar planning goes on in many schools and we do not submit this as anything original but rather as an example of a tendency in secondary education in America that is important in helping boys and girls develop into good citizens of a democratic state.

## A Seventh Grade Writes Its Own Code

AN IMPORTANT tenet in the philosophy underlying the unified arts program in the University High School is that if the children undertake experiences that are meaningful and important to them they will grow, with suitable guidance, toward the desired goals of greater self-direction and maturity. If, in addition, individuals share in the planning of group experiences that are significant to them, it is believed by the arts teachers that self-discipline and social responsibility appropriate to the age level of the persons concerned will result. An example of an educational experience for the children in harmony with this belief is the code of conduct for trips away from school, developed by the seventh-grade pupils during a year when they were making regular excursions to the Art Institute.

On the first trip, most of the pupils and the teachers felt that there were several matters of conduct that needed to be considered. These matters ranged from surprise on the part of some children that others in the group were so inconsiderate as to block the sidewalks, to a real concern as to the kind of impression the University High School seventh-graders were making on the Art Institute people who had invited them to see certain pictures and to share in various activities.

### *Laying the Groundwork for a Trip*

It was in connection with the unified arts program that the seventh-graders were taking these particular trips. In this program the children are organized into five "interest" groups. So when the more thoughtful children asked, "Shouldn't we do something about how we act when we go to the Art Institute?" it was natural that they should suggest that one from each interest group be elected to meet as a committee to talk things over. Two boys and three girls were chosen. One teacher met with them, selected

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By NELLIE L. MERRICK, Teacher, Laboratory School, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

because her room had conference tables and was most readily accessible.

At the first meeting the committee listed all items of behavior that occurred to them, chiefly in negative form, such as "don't block sidewalks," and "no singing on the train." The children then reworded some of the statements, dropped out duplicates, and otherwise organized them as clearly as they could. They did not, however, feel equal to speaking for the rest of the class, and so they reported back to their own groups and then met again to consider further revision.

Discussion of ways and means of giving the entire class an opportunity to voice their opinion led one member of the committee to offer to cut a stencil of the statements in their present state. Plenty of blank lines were left on the sheet for members of the class to write in additional statements of their own as well as to indicate the relative importance of the items already listed. The president called a class meeting during arts period as soon as the blank was mimeographed.

Hard work on the part of the original committee and some teacher assistance were necessary in order to summarize and organize the seventy-five responses from the entire class. It was at this point that the statements were changed from negative to positive because several on the committee said that it was more cheerful not to have to read "don't" so many times.

Eventually a one-page mimeographed sheet materialized. Double the usual number were provided, and on punched paper, because the children wanted one for their notebooks in addition to a signed one in their arts file. The final form was discussed by the whole group before the next Art Institute trip.

### *Varied Reactions Greet the Plan*

As the code of conduct evolved, the children's reactions were extremely interesting. Several rather violent discussions indicated that some of them had given very little thought to the more adult privileges and obligations that came with their twelfth birthdays, altho in some cases the parents had helped them face the fact of the full fare instead of permitting or urging them to evade it.

Very noticeable, as might be expected, was the effect of the previous school experience of the children. Those who had been rather closely supervised in group activities in earlier years were naturally not as well prepared to accept wisely opportunities for greater freedom and self-direction as those who had been permitted a share, commensurate with their age level, in managing things for themselves. Thruout, it was extremely reassuring that the children discussed everything freely and frankly, accepting a teacher as a member of the group rather than an "authoritarian" adult.

There seemed to be a close relation between items numbered three and four and the way the children were prepared for the sort of educational

experience they were to have. They were much more ready, naturally, to listen attentively, ask good questions, and cooperate with rules if they were accustomed to knowing why the trip was being taken, what would be seen or listened to, and how to discover afterward whether it was any benefit to them. Even then, however, many seventh-graders used a pencil line to indicate that they weren't sure they would be able to look interested if they weren't.

**The Seventh Grade's  
CODE OF CONDUCT**

As a student of University High and a member of the seventh-grade class, I will try my best to conduct myself according to this code at school and elsewhere:

1. I will act decent on the train, bus, car, or other conveyance. (This means to stay put and not be noisy.)
2. I will be courteous and considerate of other people. I will not run ahead or lag behind the group.
3. At meetings, assemblies, or on tours, I will listen attentively to the speaker or the guide, not talking except to ask all the good questions I can. I shall look interested and be polite even if I am bored.
4. If the building has rules—such as not talking in the art galleries or not writing on the pictures—I shall obey them.
5. When buying tickets I will accept the responsibility for paying full fare even if I think I can get in for half.

The date of my 12th birthday is (was) \_\_\_\_\_.

After careful thought I am signing my name to this code of conduct which was prepared by the seventh grade. (I have put a single pencil line thru any statements which I personally feel unable to accept at this time.)

If I slip up now and then on my good intentions I should be reminded by members of the class or by the faculty and will act on such suggestions pleasantly and promptly.

(signed) \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Lessons Learned**

The results of the whole project were very gratifying in terms of pupil assumption of responsibility and the carrying thru of planning to a successful completion. The children seemed to become more aware of the obligations as well as the privileges of greater freedom. Conduct became much more acceptable on trips away from school, not thru outward conformity to adult pressure, but thru the more promising and more permanent method of pupil acceptance of responsibility suited to the age level. Later in the year, the seventh graders were able to arrange and carry thru entirely by themselves the details for a trip to the Museum of Science and Industry, which is within walking distance of the school.

Growth in self-discipline and social responsibility is not rapid or even

continuous, of course. Faculty philosophy and curriculum organization are tremendously important. Pupil planning and pupil-teacher planning, used steadily, consistently, and intelligently, however, will carry the children far toward realizing successfully their adolescent and adult role in the school and in the community.



*Courtesy of Public School 194, Manhattan, New York*

**Use of resources and sharing of knowledge  
grows out of planning**

## Reports on Group Planning

THESE projects are not here recorded in any detail. The procedures are merely suggested in the hope that they will be helpful to teachers wondering what kinds of activities lend themselves to group planning.

### *Planning Takes Many Forms*

In one rural elementary school,<sup>1</sup> the children, the teachers, and one mother who is a botanist, have undertaken as a three-year project to make a study of the plant life of their community and to beautify their school grounds of several acres. The activities were planned to fit into the regular school day as part of the routine work. Flower beds, vegetable gardens, an outdoor fireplace, rustic seating with table arrangements near by, transplanted native trees along walkways, and bird-feeding stations were included in the plans. Varied activities were contemplated—field trips, conservation efforts, exchange of plants between home and school gardens, and study of the influences of birds and insects. The one mother agreed to enter into these activities regularly and to enlist the help of other mothers.

During the project, the supervisor frequently took note of the children's activities. A group of children were seen going from room to room sharing a chart. They had exchanged flowers with the mother mentioned and she had sent them an analyzed sampling of her garden. In a first grade a little girl drew a bird in a tree as she watched one feeding at the station before her schoolroom window. She remarked, "The bird is singing sweetly to me."

<sup>1</sup> Abstract of a thesis by Merle Davis, *How Groups of Children Develop Value in Their School Work through the Use of the Resources in Their Communities*. College of William and Mary. Some five or more situations are analyzed and compared under each of the following fourteen groupings: using the assistance of talented and skilled adults in the community; making school excursions; personal interviews with adults; using free services of institutions; corresponding; using resources of homes; public performances; exhibits; conferences with other schools; radio broadcasts; studies of community; participating with adults in community institutions; and working with adults for community improvements.

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By INGA OLLA HELSETH, *College of William and Mary,*  
*Williamsburg, Virginia*

A fifth-grade boy was writing, "I have learned that woods in winter are as interesting as at any time." Children were making scale drawings to show possible arrangement of their grounds. These they would submit both to the school and the patrons. When a group of boys not in the school maliciously destroyed some gardens and tore down their outdoor fireplace, the children gravely determined to reconstruct them. Many children reported having found new hobbies. Some improved home surroundings.

The school participated in a flower exhibit held by adults; the children's exhibit was wild flowers. This was easy since they maintained a changing school exhibit of wild flowers. Classes pressed wild flowers. Groups consulted frequently with adults. One mother remarked that her boys were not so anxious to go away from home and community for recreation since they had developed interest in the local flowers, trees, birds, and gardens. Thruout the entire experience there were countless examples of children doing planning of all kinds—with one another and with adults, planning for an immediate job and one requiring a long-time view.

### We Grow as We Plan

A teacher<sup>2</sup> taking over a seventh grade in an average county consolidated school found in a drab room a class accustomed to rather formal recitations with inclinations toward much bickering among themselves. She saw her work as a project in group and individual guidance.

The teacher herself made no effort to change the appearance of the room. She did ask questions, told incidents from other class experiences, listened with respect to all manner of remarks that she could bring into the open. At length one child said that he could not stand "this room" for a year. He wanted to know what could be done about it. The teacher encouraged the class to consider his challenge. By degrees thru her manipulation of both informal conversations and more formal discussions, a plan evolved for raising money and for painting the room by the class during the Thanksgiving holidays. This naturally led to making curtains, chair covers, decorative windows, and pictures. A program for parents came next, then gifts for families, a radio broadcast from a near-by station and participation in an experiment in nutrition. Thruout there was a deliberate undertaking to modify class and individual members.

Changing the classroom was the first opportunity to work and plan

<sup>2</sup> Abstract of a thesis by Mary Carter, *A Study of Personal Relationships within a Seventh Grade Class*. College of William and Mary. Contains six studies:

- A. The Teacher and Susie Share Responsibilities
- B. Mearns Faces His Difficulties Squarely
- C. Lu Learns to Analyze and Help Herself
- D. Hans Achieves Desired Leadership
- E. The Teacher and Group Plan Situations for Dan's Development
- F. The Group Influences Rand's Way of Living in the Classroom.

together at length for something of obvious mutual benefit. It brought realization of the need for teamwork. Previously they had given little thought to the group and each member had fought for himself. Now when Mearns saw that by going to a difficult but personally less pleasant job, he could contribute to the rapid completion of the class project, he left to his competitor, Hans, the more pleasing job. Susie's suggestions were sound and must be accepted altho before she had been a spurned member. Hans must do his part of the physical labor. Dan must not avoid all responsibilities. The girl who before was thought to be domineering was now a valuable leader. Each had to do a genuine part if the whole was to be finished promptly. To act together was essential; so they undertook to solve problems in group relationships instead of aggravating conditions.

Thus the informal cooperation that ensued brought a breakdown of earlier misconceptions. The teacher was no longer an "official" to be held at a distance; pupil-to-pupil relationships moved away from being "highly competitive in the open but with many underground currents." New sides of each member appeared. Pairs and groups spontaneously undertook tasks. Approval of good planning and evaluating for the class made clever ideas and brisk analyses welcome. Achievement of wholesome living thruout the day demanded forethought by many and concessions by all.



*Courtesy of Child Care Center, High School of Commerce,  
Springfield, Massachusetts*

**Learning to live together is basic to group planning**

While there evolved this conscious effort to develop a more desirable group, personal growth was accelerated by the efforts of the class. The children saw that standards were raised and lowered by the acts of members. While the class curbed the attempt of a minority to impose its wishes on the group, they also worked with Lu to make it possible for her to achieve. They insisted that Rand be honest in practices; indeed, they steadily modified many specific poor habits in members. They searched out and utilized talents. No longer was the chief effort of each to avoid "loss of prestige." Tensions disappeared. The members became conscious of the personal benefit from the newly established group. They lost their fear of one another and so could find new ways of being comrades. They reveled in the group's approval but changed at its frown.

The group was "an instrument for causing its members to change but the group itself was what the members made it." Group planning and not an individual lecture was the method employed.

### *Planning Differs with Each Group*

Planning should vary in accordance with differences in classes. Planning will differ in the type of responses given by the children but also from the type of guidance given by the teacher. This guidance may vary in manner of selecting field for study, in types of material presented to class for consideration, in speed used while organizing, and in fostering care given to children's tentative suggestions.

The following account<sup>8</sup> brings this to attention by giving contrasts in two classes studied by the same teacher in different cities, but under assignment of the same course of study and the same textbooks. The children in both classes were classified as fifth- and sixth-graders.

The children in Class X averaged ten years in chronological age and 100 in IQ. They came from modest homes in a suburban area and had fathers who were skilled mechanics or petty officers in the navy. In contrast the children in Class Y averaged twelve years in chronological age and 85 in IQ. They came from the slum section of their city and had fathers who were unskilled laborers. Many of the fathers were frequently on relief even in the time of a national manpower shortage.

Differences in the unconscious planning by the children themselves were evident in their first entrance to the classrooms in the fall. Class X entered softly. They swiftly sought front seats, observed curtains and pictures with a sweep of the eyes, whispered comments to each other, and looked breathlessly toward the teacher. Their smiles answered her smile. When the teacher asked a simple favor, eager offers came instantly. One child

<sup>8</sup> Abstract of a thesis by Helen McDowell, *A Study of the Difference in Ability and Performance in Two Grades*. College of William and Mary.

asked a question about a mural on the wall; fellowship was apparently felt as information was given about how this work was done by children they had known. This had been considered a problem class the preceding year, so the teacher hastened to make favorable comment. She spoke of good posture that she saw. They planned squads for some playground work. Lunchroom procedures were discussed. The teacher introduced the spelling lesson. Conversation was easily developed around experiences recalled by the words. Soon they were writing "beautiful thoughts" around the words.

Class Y entered differently. A roar and a scramble heralded their start; the clamor grew as they mounted the stairs nor did it subside in the classroom. There appeared savage struggling for choice back seats, some boys actually rolled in fist fights on the floor, some large girls gleefully pulled the hair of small boys. No one paid any attention to what had been placed in the room or indeed to the new teacher and the new principal standing at the front of the room. The teacher's first words, of necessity, rose harsh above the din; then there were shrugs of indifference, muttered rebellion, and disgusted remarks. "Ain't nothin' to school." "Didn't want to come nohow." Specific, watchful, forceful directing then got the machinery of the school day to moving.

In accordance with the course of study and the textbook content, one of the first fields within which the teacher led each class to plan, was that of pioneering in America. Class X took spontaneously to the books which the teacher introduced and placed conspicuously available in the classroom. Only invitations, some informative remarks, and appreciation of the first rather tentative responses were necessary on the part of the teacher.

After some weeks of investigation they became free with suggestions. One girl had a group around her as she planned with them how to make puppets in pioneer dress; little squeals of laughter came as they considered how to obtain and use bits of fur. A group of boys wanted permission to use a certain table for construction of a stockade as they envisaged it. With enjoyment many began drawings and paintings—before long there were dozens of sketches from which to choose when illustrating ideas. With a little help to individuals, poems and songs appeared after the teacher had commented to the others on the beauty of the first efforts that several timidly brought her when she suggested that they try writing.

Later, and with more deliberate planning, a science corner developed where a few children led experimentations with electrical materials. Others eventually found their most satisfying expression in the grafting of fruit trees and plants on the school grounds with aid from a sympathetic janitor who knew how to graft. Thruout, reading grew apace. The library at school and libraries in the homes were ransacked. So effective were their efforts that the class, without any regular reading lessons, made

in the first semester progress of a year and a half in reading according to a standard reading test.

Class Y was also introduced to the study of pioneering. They were already rebelling about using the books that according to custom in the school had been immediately put directly into their hands. Recalling the delight of her previous class when she had told them the story of Daniel Boone, the teacher attempted this with a large map on which to trace his movements. The map was evidently meaningless. The class gradually fell into disorderly sideline play with mutterings such as, "Ain't nuthin' to it."

Only twice in the unit that the teacher strove to develop did genuine interest appear. One normal child in the class told a story about a pioneer using a crosscut saw. The class seized upon the topic of crosscut saws and a lively discussion ensued. Exact drawings of the saw were made and discussions by the class concerning its manipulation proved to be fascinating to them. Again the teacher tried to use books; this time she presented library books on the third-grade level with each page of factual statements headed by a picture. The children liked these but accepted only one topic to continue; that topic was flatboats. One account told about the construction of flatboats by the pioneers. Again the children went into huddles. They discussed how to build flatboats. Much later the teacher understood this response when she found these very children making crude boats from driftwood on the banks of their beloved river which flowed thru the bottoms in which they lived. After this flare of interest the children would have nothing to do with accounts of pioneers. Nor were they interested in the fact that Captain John Smith is supposed to have met Pocahontas where their playground now is.

However, these children of Class Y could plan when the situation was challenging to them. The teacher saw that they were making little growth thru the exercises about the pioneers but she noted their keen interest in their immediate environment. One day she asked, "What would you show a stranger in M—?" Now the bored children came alive. They were suddenly full of information. The lists under each heading grew longer on the board. With the startled teacher's guidance they planned. They made arrangements to prove certain statements to others by visiting the points after school. At a mere hint, they actually copied down items they desired to inquire about in the neighborhood. Now they even included the marker on their playground which previously they had rejected.

A trip was made by the whole class to a near-by lumber mill. There was now no behavior problem. They watched with attention the processes. Upon return to the classroom, the first voluntary drawing and writing done by the class came immediately. Exact scenes seen at the plant were made with accuracy tho crudely. Letters thanking the principal and the plant manager were quickly under way all over the room. The children

themselves introduced new phases—not about history, not about books they might use—but about manufacturing plants to be visited and building activities to be viewed. The next trip, eagerly planned by them, was to their river, in which they saw an oil boat pumping oil into tanks. This trip even caused voluntary reading of accounts supplied them about the drilling, shipping, and pumping of oil.

When Jack, indeed a child of the streets, told the class about the train tracks that were under construction only a few blocks away, that enterprise proved to have a big attraction for them. They marched to the scene at their own suggestion in perfect order. They stood in silent awe as they surveyed the situation. Quicker than the teacher they figured out the process from the log cutting to the completed track. Never had the teacher seen a class more engrossed. Both boys and girls followed each operation closely. Notebooks came out. Words the teacher had heard but never used were being written with some insight as to their proper form—creosoting, trestle, crane, welding, and riveting. Instead of tiring quickly and becoming rowdy as they usually did, they became more and more fascinated. The superintendent of the construction, who at first waved them back, began pointing out details to the eager listeners and answering their many intelligent questions.

At last, cold and very tired, they trudged back to school. There was no letdown. They began organizing their notes into papers—astounding papers these were to the teacher. A discussion was willingly planned to get together information acquired. Free drawings now were full of action. Two boys, aged fifteen, with IQ's below 68, began a huge construction to show the scene. The others showed great delight and checked to get the details correct. Even the poorest readers recognized the words which the teacher had written on the board by request while they wrote their papers, and furthermore they wanted to read and reread them.

These experiences constitute the high point of the year for Class Y. So far as it was necessary to continue with the books and topics assigned, they continued rebellious and inattentive. They were perhaps more so because they had a glimpse of what they desired. Only in the moments that could be stolen from a crowded program did school life connect with reality for them the rest of that year.

## A Community Plans for Teen-agers

WITH its two high schools, three junior high schools, and some out-of-school youth, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan—a community of eight thousand—has a teen-age population of about one thousand. In addition, there are more than a thousand students enrolled at the Central Michigan College of Education which is located in the community. One of the problems of the city is to provide adequate recreation for this age group.

### *Recreation Is on Mt. Pleasant's Agenda*

Provision is made in the Mt. Pleasant city charter for a recreation committee to advise with the city commission concerning community recreation. At the present time this committee is made up of two college teachers, a businessman, a minister, the superintendent of schools, and the director of recreation. For several years the city has sponsored a recreation program. A director is employed for full time in the summer, but for only part time in the winter because of the school program.

In summer, well-organized playground activities are carried on at five different centers with sufficient leadership for each. The largest of these is a spacious city park which is equipped with a swimming pool, tennis courts, courts for minor recreational games, playground equipment, softball diamonds, and picnic grounds. In the wintertime it furnishes ice hockey and skating rinks which are well attended during favorable weather. This park is a popular center for all age groups.

So far as summer activities are concerned, both for adults and children, the program is probably as complete as that of the average city of this size. However, there are almost no facilities available for an indoor program. The college and school gymnasiums are practically in full-time use for school purposes. There are neither facilities nor equipment for the other usual recreational activities except for those enrolled in school and,

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By GRACE RYAN, *Director of Physical Education for Women, Central Michigan College of Education and Chairman of the Recreation Committee, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan*

even for them, the space is rather limited. Commercial recreation in the city offers only bowling and movies so far as the teen-age group is concerned.

### *Teen-Agers and Adults Plan a Youth Center*

When the present recreation committee met for the first time about a year ago, it was faced with the problem of previous committees: "How may we enlarge the program for wintertime, especially for the teen-age group?" The members were alert to the youth-center movement which was sweeping the country, and in spite of the fact that youth centers had not proved successful in all cases, they thought that such a set-up might offer some solution to the local problem. The school superintendent reported expressions of interest for such a project from both student groups and parents.

It happened that the University of Michigan adult education program sponsored a community work conference on the subject of "Youth Recreation" at the time when this interest was growing here; so some members of the committee, accompanied by a representative group of boys and girls, attended this conference. It proved exceedingly helpful so that soon afterward plans began to crystallize for the establishment of our youth center. There were discussions on the subject in various high-school organizations and in classes.

A joint meeting of the city recreation committee and representatives of all classes from the seventh grade thru high school was held for the purpose of going over all the possibilities of such a project. The boys and girls expressed themselves freely concerning their wishes for the program of the center. They suggested that there be provision for the following: a crafts room; a dance floor with a nickelodeon; table games—pool, billiards, ping-pong; a reading room with numerous magazines of youth interest; a snack room with bar, tables, and a radio. They also requested that an instructional program be a part of the activities of the center so that there might be something more than just diversion for them.

### *Problems Do Not Stop Them*

Many questions arose as to the location of the center, the ages included, the program, membership fees, leadership, the extent of youth control.

Youngsters asked whether the real reason behind the adult interest in this project was the prevention of juvenile delinquency. Upon being assured that the purpose was the expansion of a program of recreation already established, they concluded that youth and adults would need to plan together, probably over a long period, before the many problems could be solved. They saw that each group needed the other and that the schools and the community must cooperate to accomplish the desired

results. They voted enthusiastically to support this project. The adults present at this meeting were much impressed with the clear thinking and good judgment of these young people. One after another commented upon the fine values of such meetings together.

For the next few months frequent and long planning meetings took place. The original committee was enlarged to include youth representatives of each school and of each section of the city. Subcommittees worked on problems of finance, decorations, room-planning, equipment, and program.

Of course the first problem was the matter of financing such an organization. Since the city's annual recreation budget had not made allowance for this program expansion, the city was able to help only to the extent of about \$2800. This meant that a community drive would be necessary to raise the additional \$5000 which the committee estimated would be necessary to furnish and maintain the center for the first year.

A member of the public school high-school staff was selected to head the campaign for money raising. Students, faculty, and others worked with him both in the planning and in the execution of the drive. Boys and girls made a house-to-house canvass for subscriptions. Citizens, working with the youth, contacted service clubs, women's clubs, fraternal organizations, churches, industries, and business houses for financial support. There was a very successful rummage sale and a paper drive. The community gave excellent support to all efforts and the quota was more than met.

### *Chippewa Teepee Comes into Being*

Two adjacent store buildings in the business district were obtained as a site for the center. The young people named it the Chippewa Teepee which was very appropriate because there are many Chippewa Indians living around Mt. Pleasant and for years the city was the site of a United States Government Indian school. Using the Indian theme, the art classes in the schools planned the murals and other interior decorations and did the painting under the guidance and help of the art teacher. Industrial arts classes found plenty of work to do in moving and building partitions. The custodial staff of the public schools also did a great deal of the specialized work about the buildings.

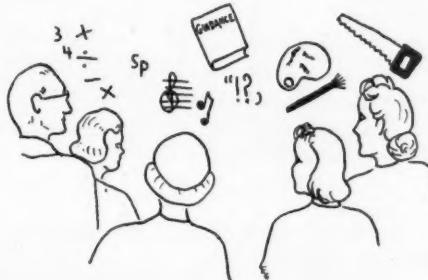
The Chippewa Teepee is nearly finished except for the addition of a few pieces of furniture. The two buildings have been completely transformed into an attractive club for boys and girls. The basements were thrown together to make a large game room with pool, billiards, ping-pong, shuffleboard, and other recreational games. A division of it is to be used in a work project, the nature of which will be decided later. One of the main floors has been made into a dance room and the other is divided

into three rooms, one for reading and writing, one for small table games, and the third for a "snack bar." Practically all the equipment is new. The center has been made available to the "teen-agers" several times now and seems to meet with much approval both on the part of the young people and their parents.

### *Looking Ahead*

There is much yet to be done. After a director is employed, there will be programs to plan, memberships to establish, volunteer services from youth and adults to obtain, plans to make for the governing and constant care of the Teepee to insure that it meets the needs of the boys and girls of Mt. Pleasant. Undoubtedly the faculty and students at the college will welcome the opportunity which such a center may give prospective teachers for experience in leading recreational activities such as they may be called upon to supervise when going into the teaching field.

The project will be a very interesting one to watch. So far it has been a fine example of cooperation among the youth, adults, school personnel, and city officials of a community toward a goal which they believe to be worthwhile. Even if nothing more happens at the Chippewa Teepee, this working and planning together has been of inestimable value to those participating. The splendid enthusiasm of the youth has given the city recreational committee the desire and courage to plan toward further expansion of recreational facilities to include all age groups in the community after the war.



## We Learn to Plan by Planning

INSTITUTIONS which educate teachers have responsibility for developing competence in democratic group planning. However, they often fail to fulfil this responsibility due largely to faulty conceptions of the task.

Professors advocate democracy in administration and in classroom teaching but conduct their own course in a thoroly autocratic manner. They advocate faculty participation in school management and policy formulation, pupil-teacher planning in the classroom, and parent participation in school affairs, but fail to see the relationship of such procedures to their own instruction. Teacher education programs and activities too often are planned without any student participation. Likewise, school administrators often give lip service to democratic education and group planning procedures but do not practice them in relationships with the faculty. This failure to practice democratic procedures results in new teachers entering the schools with little effective education in group planning. In-service teachers have slight inclination or opportunity to learn group planning procedures on the job. The large majority "teach as they have been taught," regardless of admonitions to do otherwise and theories of democratic education they may have memorized. The problem before us, then, is: "How can the teacher education institutions educate for effective group planning?"

In recent years a growing number of colleges and universities have developed procedures which prepare teachers and administrators for democratic education, including effective group planning. Courses, programs of study, the life of the campus—all emphasize opportunity to experience democratic procedures. Field services to schools also emphasize group planning processes.

It is the purpose of this chapter to give examples which are proving successful in teacher education for group planning. Illustrations will be presented that describe both campus and in-service workshops, field services to school systems by colleges and universities, and pupil-teacher planning in the classroom.

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By WALTER A. ANDERSON, *Dean, School of Education, Montana State University, Missoula, Montana*

### We Build on These Principles

Fundamental to education for group planning are certain basic assumptions which should be presented at the outset.

1. Courses and programs of the college which educates teachers should be conducted in a thoroly democratic manner. Included should be the opportunity for group planning, since people learn effective procedures largely thru guided experience and practice.
2. Field services to the school systems should be devoted to the problems and interests of local teachers and administrators. Plans for meeting these problems and interests should be developed cooperatively, since this creates incentive for and gives practice in group planning.
3. Group planning motivates interest and purpose in dealing with significant problems. Furthermore, it creates desire to investigate thoroly all materials and resources which promise to contribute to a solution.
4. Effective group planning at the pre-service and in-service levels develops skill in planning which may be adapted in classrooms, in school administration, in educational organizations, and the like. In short, procedures are learned which can be adapted in other situations.
5. Group planning encourages the creative in teachers and pupils alike. It develops zest for further study and investigation. Most important of all, it makes for unity and cooperation in a class group or school faculty. It contributes to the upgrading of the teaching profession.



*Courtesy of University School, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio*

**The group plan provides motivation for the task**

6. Group planning is the heart of the democratic process. Therefore, competence in planning processes is essential for those who would educate in democratic citizenship.

### *Story of a Summer Workshop*

Hundreds of colleges and universities now conduct summer workshops for teachers and administrators. This innovation in teacher education is most productive in educating for effective group planning.

The following illustration is an excerpt from a report prepared by Guy Fox<sup>1</sup> of the Denver public schools, who directed the 1944 summer workshop at Montana State University.

The story of the summer workshop in education has not yet been adequately told. If this could be done, it would interest many more teachers and school administrators. Such was the conclusion of the evaluation committee of the 1944 summer workshop at Montana State University. This committee was composed of a representative group of classroom teachers, school principals, and superintendents. Their enthusiasm was genuine and contagious. This report attempts to comply with their request that the workshop be adequately described.

#### *What Was the Workshop?*

It was democracy in action in teacher education. It was more than a hundred teachers—from primary grades to university faculties and from superintendents to classroom teachers—working together in the analysis and study of their own educational problems, in the sharing of experience and thinking, in planning for more effective work on their jobs next year. It was a spirit of mutual respect, of helpfulness, of confidence, and of courage to adventure in promising new areas of education.

#### *What Did Teachers Do?*

*Members held a general meeting each day.* To this meeting at nine o'clock came the students and staff cooperating in the workshop. Here vital problems of general interest were discussed by panels of workshop members or by visiting experts. Time was reserved in the program for general participation which was often spirited. Many members commented that these general meetings were especially informative and stimulating. The consistently packed room, seating approximately a hundred people, also testified to this. The general session program was an important unifying force in the workshop.

*Members organized themselves into groups and committees.* Notice that members organized themselves. Groups were formed for the study of those problems about which members were concerned. Any group could

<sup>1</sup> Fox, Guy. *The 1944 Summer Workshop in Education at Montana State University*. School of Education, Missoula, Montana. (Mimeographed.)

be formed if there were members interested; and no one was expected to attend a group unless it was giving him help that he wanted. Furthermore, an individual was expected to drop out of a group when he had got what he wanted; a group was expected to disband when it had accomplished its purpose. Groups usually met two or three times a week for periods of fifty minutes.

Committees were set up on the same basis. Once each week student representatives from each of the study groups, together with all interested student and staff members, met to plan the schedule for the next week, to evaluate progress, and to make suggestions for improvement of the workshop program.

*Members also worked on individual projects.* Many teachers came with specific problems to solve: a curriculum unit to be prepared, a guidance program to organize for a school or a particular grade, library materials and teaching aids to explore and organize, plans for teaching a particular group of pupils, and other important projects. These teachers in setting up their workshop programs budgeted sufficient time to develop these individual projects with the aid of staff members and groups in the workshop.

*Student members held many conferences with staff members.* Many felt that these informal friendly conferences, with any and all staff members who might give help, were the best part of the workshop. Scheduling was made easy; problems of all sorts were discussed. Thru these conferences the student kept his staff advisers informed of his activities and progress in carrying out the plans that they had set up together.

*Members did a lot of swapping of experiences.* They had many opportunities for informal discussion and exchange of experiences with fellow teachers in the workshop. Many counted this as among the most valuable of their opportunities.

*Members balanced work with social activities and recreation.* Workshop philosophy specifically advocates balanced living. Informal, friendly sociability of many sorts was encouraged: the all-school picnic; informal evenings with German Arciniegas, our visitor from Colombia; an evening hike to the "M"; and so on to "cokes" at the planning meeting. Weekends gave opportunities for sight-seeing and fishing trips into the mountains and valleys that surround Missoula.

The above is only a partial list, of course, but it will give some understanding of the major activities at the 1944 summer workshop at Montana State University.

#### *What Was Done in the Workshop Groups?*

The following brief descriptions summarized from the group reports help interested educators to see the wide range of opportunities offered by this phase of the workshop.

*Teacher-pupil planning.* This group consisted of twenty to thirty members. They met three times a week. Teacher-pupil planning, the core curriculum in high schools, the experience curriculum in elementary schools, and student government were the fields explored. Group-planning procedures were practiced thruout the term. At the last session, members gave criticisms of their meetings and suggestions for future improvement.

*Financing the high schools of Montana.* This group tackled "the problem of trying to plan for adequate finances to operate the high schools of Montana during the emergency that has arisen as a result of decreased enrolments, increased cost of operation, and inconsistencies in the laws and in their interpretations." This was a highly significant study to meet a very pressing problem. The group continued its study during the remaining four weeks of the summer school after the workshop closed and developed concrete proposals for consideration by the citizens of the state.

*Social problems.* This group of thirty members voted to give its entire attention to the study of inter-American relations and problems of educating for good intercultural relationships. German Arciniegas with his intimate and wide knowledge of Latin America, his keen constructive analyses of our mutual problems, and his friendly, humorous interpretations of the issues under discussion was a resource that the group felt should not be missed. Thruout the discussions, but particularly in the last two, the group considered how teachers and schools in Montana might promote better understanding and goodwill between the peoples of the Americas.

*Homemaking.* This was a relatively small group of seven permanent members. Topics of many sorts were explored. The group reported: "We do not feel that the values gained within our group can be listed as one, two, and three. We have received definite help in linking our school and community life—the dynamic function of homemaking. Paramount for each has been the personality development thru happy and apparently casual contacts—a direct result of the friendly, cooperative atmosphere of this workshop."

*Directed outside reading.* This was the title under which a group, averaging six members, was organized thru the efforts of a student member of the workshop. It met on an interest basis to consider the problem of outside reading in high school.

*Elementary-school teaching.* This group met to discuss the problems of the elementary-school teacher, both city and rural. Problems considered were: methods of teaching primary and remedial reading, how and when to present phonics, reading programs thruout the grades, library books most usable in a small school, the development of children and their discipline problems, health and physical education thru games, and creative activities in writing and in the graphic arts.

*Guidance.* The group membership varied from four to seven and was made up of those with special problems to solve and those merely wishing to find out more about guidance. Many problems were studied. The group reported: "Attendance was good. Interest and participation excellent. Enthusiasm ran high. Follow-up on points raised in the general sessions was encouraging. Intention of group members is to go back home in September and actually put into practice as far as possible the things worked out in the workshop."

*Fine arts.* These folks experimented with or had demonstrations of: finger painting, crayon etching, papier-mâché, stencils on fabric, linoleum blocks, and spatter technics. They pooled experiences and ideas on: art at various grade levels, integration of art with other subjects, materials and equipment, and the like. They prepared bibliographies to fit individual needs and personal interests, gathered notes on ideas and technics, provided extremely valuable poster service for the workshop, and conducted two general meetings for the entire workshop membership.

*Music.* The activities in this field illustrate well the versatility of workshop procedures. Because of the diversity of interest, several music groups were formed.

Group I was composed of elementary teachers who were interested in materials and units of study. This group was the largest, having about



*Courtesy of Wilmette, Illinois, Public Schools*

Planning requires a background of rich experience

twenty-four regular participants. Special projects were undertaken by individuals and reports were made to the group as a whole.

Group II was composed largely of "refresher" teachers, rural teachers, and others who had never before taught music. Their main objective was to get enough actual musical experience so that they would be able to teach their own music. Much work was done on rote singing, rhythmic activities, and folk dancing. About fifteen students attended regularly.

Group III was made up of eighteen students interested in learning to play the "song flute." They met two times a week for four weeks, actually playing on the instrument. During the eight meetings the first instruction book was completed sufficiently well so that they will be able to teach their own pupils and go on with it themselves if they so desire.

Group IV included five students who were interested in high-school bands, orchestras, and choruses. They met at least once a week and had many individual conferences with the instructors in regard to their own problems. Materials and special procedures were discussed and their own special projects were developed.

Another activity deserves mention. Small groups and individuals met with the instructor for the purpose of studying their speaking voices. Actual recordings of the students' voices were made. A total of forty-one students participated during the six-week period. This project has many possibilities for future development.

*Refresher program.* This group was composed of experienced teachers who wished to learn new teaching aids, younger teachers who wished to work with older teachers of greater experience, and returning teachers anxious to study the modern trends of education and new methods of teaching. All wanted to study and understand the Montana course of study for elementary and graded schools and the unit system of teaching.

*Curriculum workshop on the revision of Montana secondary-school workshop.* Its purpose was to explore the problems involved in initiating revision of the current secondary-school courses published in 1932. It was under the direction of J. A. Woodard of the state department of public instruction. The group made excellent progress in the development of several experimental courses in subject fields.

*Unit course for administrators and teachers on wartime and postwar educational problems.* This was a definitely organized course set up in two-week units. Because of its informal nature, however, the members were included in workshop activities. Sessions of the unit course were open to all workshop members who wished to attend.

*Committees.* Committee work is another valuable way to get experience, make friends, and become a contributing member of the group. The social committee planned many enjoyable events, chief of which was the all-school picnic, a grand success. The evaluation committee rendered very

important service in conducting evaluative discussions, calling for reports, and conducting the final general meeting of the workshop—an excellent culminating experience. The exhibits committee helped to reorganize and maintain bulletin board service, organized exhibits on inter-American affairs, prepared posters, and the like. Their help was indispensable.

### *The Value of Group Planning*

Considerable space has been given to this descriptive account since it seems clear that summer workshops provide most effective teacher education for group planning. The entire workshop philosophy and procedure makes meaningful the importance of democratic planning and it provides both faculty and students with practice in effective procedures. Group planning technics thus learned are easily adapted in subsequent educational enterprises of workshop members. Effective procedures find their way into the classroom, faculty meetings, community organization, and the administration of schools because their feasibility has been effectively demonstrated.

### *Workshops for Teachers on the Job*

Several school systems, as a result of experience by faculty members in summer workshop programs, have found it feasible to establish in-service workshops in lieu of the usual type of faculty meetings. The assistance of consultants from teachers colleges and university schools of education has been enlisted to help in planning and conducting the workshop. The results have been mutually beneficial to both the college and the school system.

The in-service workshop emphasizes problems and interests of the local faculty group. Effort is made to enlist the aid of all teachers in planning the program and evaluating its outcomes. Thru the planning process inherent in the workshop procedure, a favorable atmosphere is created for group planning in the classroom and competence to conduct it effectively is developed in teachers.

The writer has directed and served as consultant in several in-service workshops including one in Wilmette, Illinois, at the time the school system was participating in the national study which was sponsored by the Commission on Teacher Education of the National Council on Education.<sup>2</sup>

This in-service workshop conducted by the faculty of Wilmette<sup>3</sup> included about 80 percent of the school personnel. It met weekly on

<sup>2</sup>Prall, Charles E., and Cushman, C. Leslie. *Teacher Education In Service*. Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1944. 503 p.

<sup>3</sup>Anderson, Walter A. "The New Teacher Must Not Be Overlooked." *Educational Method*. Vol. XXII, No. 2, November 1942. p. 81-85.

Monday afternoon for two-hour periods, occasionally followed by a dinner. Usually the professional discussions and activities were preceded by a cup of tea or coffee and a friendly socializing period when people got acquainted and exchanged experiences. For the new teacher and those who were more experienced, this was an excellent opportunity to meet co-workers.

The program was planned by a steering committee using the results of periodic polls of group interests. Discussion meetings were held twice each month and were devoted to such topics as ethics for teachers, mental health in the classroom, case studies of children, behavior problems, creative expression, the testing program, curriculum development, and parent-school relationships. All have benefited from sharing experiences and from the contributions of outside resource people who have been invited to participate. In this informal setting the teachers felt free to ask questions and to make contributions.

Two other meetings each month were devoted to the more manual types of activity. Many worked in the manual arts shop under the direction of one of the teachers. Here they learned to use and care for tools and to make simple projects from wood, appropriate to the grade level they taught. Eventually they attempted more complicated constructions



*Courtesy of Long Beach, California, Public Schools*

**The use of equipment requires planning by the group**

for their own use such as book shelves, filing cabinets, wooden trays, and the like.

Other members of the workshop joined the arts and crafts group where paint, crayons, clay, yarn, reed, scrap metal, and odds and ends of all kinds, were the media of expression. A small group became interested in work in the science laboratory on simple experiments and materials for classroom use. A fourth group worked in the music room. Here they learned simple chords to record children's original songs and listened to useful records. Those more advanced had several lessons in harmony. These informal groups had as leaders members of the Wilmette teaching staff who were selected because of their special skills and talents.

While working side by side on some creative piece of work, teachers and administrative officers alike came to know each other better and to appreciate the problems and the contributions of the other fellow. Also, as they worked on projects at the child level, they appreciated better the difficulties of children and thereby became more effective in giving guidance and help. What better opportunity could be provided for the teacher to develop than this one where all are working together in the interests of boys and girls and their own professional and personal growth?

On occasions the workshop group held dinners followed by small interest group discussions. One interest group developed plans for initiating a core program in the junior high school that fall. An additional feature was sociological study trips to places of interest in the Chicago area. These tours demonstrated the value of excursions and contributed to the social understanding of the teaching group.

A quotation from a recent report prepared for the Commission on Teacher Education by a committee of the workshop indicates the many values that accrued to members.

The large number of the faculty members taking part in the workshop gave assurance of working together that was very wholesome. A more valuable type of supervision has resulted from the cooperative efforts of classroom teacher, principal, and superintendent in formulating the policies of our schools.

The morale of the entire group was raised to a higher level as we tried to balance our living by participating in discussions of our problems, enjoying trips together, having faculty dinners, and indulging in various social activities. We know our next door neighbor much more sympathetically since we have benefited both by giving and receiving ideas.

In thinking through the problems common to all of us we have been able to broaden our points of view. Perhaps as we better understand education as a process of growth and development we will be more aware of children's attitudes and interests. We have a better understanding of what is being done in all grades, and the usual problems of all children. We see the need of working together for a closer relationship between the various age levels. A more intelligent attitude toward basic problems of behavior

may have resulted from our attempts to interpret the many types of personalities with whom we were working.

The following quotations from individuals of the group were submitted:

I believe the interchange of ideas in the workshop will help us to see our problems in a variety of aspects, perhaps reveal new methods of solving problems.

I am interested in the workshop because out of the discussions I hope will come a better understanding of living with the boys and girls, a better coordination of our various departments, a better teacher relationship which cannot help but reflect on the boys and girls with whom we share the school life.

No doubt there are innumerable gains which are intangible and defy one's effort to reduce them to words as a result of the attempts to carry on a workshop.

Participation in art, music, handicrafts, and science laboratories enabled teachers to experience some of the feelings of the children as they worked with these materials. It was felt that another medium was found by which one might express himself.

Incidentally, the workshop takes the place of many faculty meetings. Teachers come to these meetings with an open mind, for they are participants—they are not merely listeners.

### *Field Services to Schools*

The interdependence of the public schools and teacher education institutions is becoming increasingly apparent. The college's relationships with the schools of its area result in mutual benefits, among them opportunities to join together in group planning enterprises which result in increased competence in planning processes. Field service to schools is an important development in teacher education. A study group at the 1944 School for Executives<sup>4</sup> considered three questions and arrived at the following conclusions:

*I. How can a teachers' college help in the solution of problems encountered by the public schools of its service area?*

- A. By aiding in curriculum readjustment and development—thru consultation services, workshops, and conferences on campus and in the field.
- B. By providing information and help to high schools in the guidance of high quality students toward professional preparation.
- C. By continually improving the preservice program so as to provide a sufficient number of competent candidates for teaching and administrative positions.
- D. By helping with the induction of new teachers and continuing advisory relationships with recent graduates.

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from report of Study Group IVb, School for Executives, sponsored by The American Association of Teachers Colleges and the American Council on Education, held at Jackson's Mill, West Virginia, August 1944. (Mimeo.) Consultants: Walter A. Anderson and Maurice E. Troyer. Chairmen: Arthur W. Ferguson and M. S. Pittman.

E. By keeping the members of the college faculty in touch and in tune with the emerging problems and programs of the public schools.

F. By developing avenues whereby the schools can readily communicate need for help.

G. By keeping available for circulation an up-to-date library of teaching and test materials—curriculum guides, professional libraries, visual aids, sample tests, and the like.

H. By rendering service in evaluation and diagnostic programs—health, mental, academic, social and emotional development.

I. By aiding in local and regional school events.

J. By providing counseling services on local personnel problems that can best be resolved by an outside unprejudiced person.

K. By fostering and interpreting research in the schools.

L. By keeping in touch with and rendering service to community organizations—industrial, service, agricultural, and other groups.

*II. How can the college benefit from the experience of administrators, supervisors, and teachers of its service area?*

A. By assembling a library of curriculums, units of study, and reports on projects from schools of the area.

B. By using outstanding educational leaders of the area as consultants and teachers in summer conferences, workshops, and special courses.

C. By using representatives of the public schools on curriculum committees developing the preservice program of teacher education.

D. By opening the way for basically sound guidance and recruitment of students for the profession, to continue unbroken into the teachers college.

E. By providing definite time and means for regular visitation of the college faculty to schools of the service area.

F. By bringing to the campus individuals and groups from the public schools who have a special contribution to make to the thinking of students and staff of the teachers' college.

G. By using the campus as a center for educational meetings where representatives of several communities can share their ideas about ways of coping with local problems—agriculture, employment, health, education, and the like.

H. By using the college as a center for school organization meetings of the service areas—student government, school newspapers, musical festivities, athletic meets.

I. By exhibiting at stated intervals outstanding achievements of the schools of the service area—art, community study reports, creative writing, and the like.

*III. How can the teachers' colleges and public schools strengthen their standing in society?* It is clear that practices and procedures listed above will improve the services of both school and college and thereby strengthen the position of both. There are several additional points worthy of mention.

A. By cooperative efforts to promote the professionalization of teachers in both school and college thru the development of standards of qualifications and salaries.

B. By encouraging faculty members in schools and colleges to participate vigorously in professional and civic organization.

- C. By cooperating with the public schools in a united effort to gain adequate support for public and teacher education.
- D. By maintaining an intelligent publicity program—thru the daily press, bulletins, campus newspapers, radio, and the like.

With some justification schoolteachers and administrators discount college teachers as impractical theorists. College teachers likewise believe schoolteachers prone to resist change. The reciprocal understandings resulting from close working relationship on common problems will make preservice teacher education more practical, develop faculty members who will be increasingly resourceful in helping schools with their problems, and increase mutual confidence. There was general agreement that field service is the best type of in-service training for college teachers.

### *The Real Test Is in the Classroom*

The "pay-off" for teacher education in group planning comes in the classroom. Here, boys and girls benefit from the competence teachers have achieved in college workshops, in in-service workshops, thru field services from colleges and universities, and in other professional activities which prepare teachers for effective group planning. Pupils in the classroom learn democratic skills including those of cooperative group planning as they experience them in their daily learning activities. Therefore, it is important we give some attention to the importance of and the procedures for pupil-teacher planning in the classroom.

In connection with the national study of teacher education conducted by the Commission on Teacher Education, the writer, as a special consultant to New Trier township schools, was invited to serve on a faculty committee of the Glencoe, Illinois, schools. This faculty group was concerned with investigating the factors which make for good group control. The consultant served as a regular member with responsibility to do his full share of the committee's work. Half-day visits were made to the classrooms of all faculty members to single out, if possible, the important factors in group control. To make a long story short, pupil-teacher planning was discovered to be the most crucial factor in good control or the lack of it. Teachers who planned with pupils for daily activities and for longer periods were more successful in establishing high morale, effective learning, and good school citizenship than those who resorted to autocratic pronouncements. They were more sensitive to individual differences in pupils and more understanding of educational needs.

This investigation resulted in a careful study<sup>5</sup> of the pupil-teacher planning process in the classroom situation. While results are not yet available, it is clear that effective pupil-teacher planning results as teachers gain competence in group planning procedures. Important among these

<sup>5</sup> To be reported in a doctor's dissertation by Kenneth E. Howe, Northwestern University.

procedures are: the planning atmosphere which is created in the classroom; recognition of pupil differences in allocating responsibilities; leadership on the part of the teacher in thoroly discussing proposals and evaluating them with the group; and check up on the results achieved as plans are carried out. It is important to compile curriculum records which indicate the nature of learning activities which have been completed together with some indication of achievement and further needs of each pupil. This will be helpful to other teachers as pupils go into higher grades and there is need to know of previous work and pupil accomplishment.

### ***This We Have Learned***

Teacher education for effective group planning is achieved best when teachers experience the procedures in courses and programs offered by the college. Teachers in service find summer workshops at colleges and universities and in-service workshops in their local community stimulating and effective in this regard. Closer relationships between teacher education institutions and public-school systems provide a multitude of opportunities for joint planning of mutually beneficial enterprises. Teachers and administrators who have achieved competence in group planning processes contribute significantly to education for democratic citizenship of boys and girls as they work with them in classrooms and in the all-school program. Effective group planning in classrooms, faculty groups, professional organizations, and among the lay citizenry is one of the most promising developments in modern democratic education.



*Courtesy of Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa*

**Planning enriches life when there is free interchange of ideas**

## Teachers Plan for Better Teaching

THE SOUTH SANPETE school district is a small rural unit. Its administrative and supervisory personnel consists of the superintendent, one elementary-grade supervisor, and nine principals. The members of this group recognize common and overlapping responsibilities for promoting a school program. For several years they have worked as a group unit in planning for in-service training and curriculum building. Group planning has been carried on in a monthly principal's meeting, in educational faculty meetings, in curriculum building activities, and in workshop groups for teachers and patrons.

### *Getting Ready to Go Back to School*

During the summer of 1943 circumstances related to the war and labor shortage made it necessary for the schoolboard to employ many married women as elementary schoolteachers. These parents had given service in the profession before marriage, but had not had recent experience with groups of school children. This situation meant a new attack on the in-service training program.

The planning group recognized the following facts in the situation:

1. The past teaching experience of the "recruit teachers" had given them the point of view that "subjectmatter" is the important element in education.
2. The experience of parenthood had given them a great advantage in understanding children; so the prospect of changing their attitudes about subject emphasis seemed hopeful.
3. The teachers sensed a gap between their training and recent educational trends. They were fearful; self-confidence needed to be established.
4. Teachers were eager to learn, but home responsibilities in rural communities made it almost impossible for them to attend refresher courses at university centers.

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By JENNIE CAMPBELL, *Director, Elementary Education, State Department of Public Instruction, Salt Lake City, Utah*; MARY NIELSON, *Supervisor, South Sanpete School District, Utah*; MARGARET WILLIAMS, *Supervisor, Granite School District, Utah*

A refresher workshop program was organized in the district, teachers participating in the planning. The plans were made to serve local needs and to help teachers become acquainted with the local program.

Leaders from the state department of education and from one of the universities were consulted about the plans with the result that the program became one of the university's summer offerings. Classes were held daily for three weeks in the school district. Fifteen Utah leaders in the educational field contributed to the district's workshop program.

The main emphasis of the program was to help teachers understand the general and individual needs and growth trends of children.

Laboratory centers were set up and equipped to provide many opportunities for teachers to explore new interests and materials in the fields of art, music, science, and health. Teachers selected their own laboratory activities and made their studies.

Daily observation of children was also a part of the program. A group of unselected primary-grade children attended school each day from nine to eleven o'clock. Their curriculum program consisted in working out science interests and in interpreting and expressing ideas in art, literature, and music. The teacher of the pupil group attempted to establish a favorable environment for growth and to direct responses so they might promote development. Guides for observation were used to stimulate thinking and discussion about such topics as the following:

1. The appropriateness of experiences and materials in terms of readiness
2. Provision for differences in interests and abilities
3. Wholesome teacher-pupil relationships
4. Evidences of a functioning spirit of democracy.

A discussion period was held daily during which time consultants from state and community positions of leadership contributed to the teachers' vision and understanding of the child-development field.

Reading widely from many reference books was also an aid to developing understandings. A reference library had been collected from the district, the state school office, the state department of health, and the university library. Individual reading assignments were made with concern for each teacher's interest and background.

The value of the summer workshop training program was not fully appreciated until the teachers began to apply their learnings in their own experiences with children during the school year. There were many evidences that the teachers had become somewhat more aware of children as developing personalities with different interests, needs, and potentialities.

### ***How One Teacher Tried It Out***

One illustration will serve to indicate how one teacher had been helped to recognize individual differences, free children from complete depend-

ence on textbooks, and acquire more effective habits of reading and study.

The teacher had reared her own family. She was reentering the teaching profession because the children in her community needed a teacher and the school superintendent had asked for volunteers from among those who had had teaching experience. The summer school refresher course had stressed the importance of "child development," a term which had meaning for the teacher when she related it to the experience of helping her own children develop and grow.

It seemed hopeful for this teacher to believe that the science program which she was expected to direct could lead to so many understandings about children's relationships to their natural world. At the beginning of school she wondered which particular science interest would impel her fifth-grade group to investigation activities. She soon discovered that the pupils had many interests but one held the strongest appeal. Three boys had discovered a cave in the stratified rock formations near town. Conversation led to questions about the earth's formation, erosion processes, and other geological wonders. The teacher's interest equalled that of the pupils. She had never studied geology but she knew her library source materials. She knew several people in the community who had interesting rock collections and a fund of information. This teacher felt equipped to explore the interest with her group.

In the study which followed she guided her pupils in group planning, investigating, organizing, expressing, and evaluating. Investigation activities included the following: reading from texts and reference materials; experimenting; visiting places where different formations were in evidence; communicating with authorities thru personal interviews and correspondence; collecting, exhibiting, and labeling specimens.

Effective guidance in the study of texts and references became an important challenge to this teacher who had never before individualized reading activities in a content area of study. Library resources were surveyed before and during the study. Pupils used library period time, science study time, and reading period time to read about their major interest. This gave the teacher opportunity to help individuals and small groups.

During the progress of the study it became necessary frequently to organize and evaluate the learnings which were being acquired by pupils and teacher. At the time of evaluation the group recognized that improved reading and study habits were important. It was agreed that reliable information could be obtained and shared to better advantage if pupils:

1. Had in mind what they wished to learn and understood the problem.
2. Knew how to locate material.
3. Knew how to select main and related ideas.
4. Knew how to judge the reliability of material.

5. Knew how to share ideas with others in an interesting way, using graphs, pictures, maps, and objects.
6. Could compare old and new ideas.
7. Saw ways of using information.

These standards were accepted in practice as the teacher directed the learning activities in which they were needed. Growth in more worthy study habits took place as pupils were helped to use books and materials for real and pertinent purposes.

The teacher who knew little about the subject but much about children had her most satisfying professional experience in guiding her pupils in this science experience. Her own sense of growth in power as a teacher was perhaps the greatest value which emerged from the total experience.

### *A Cooperative Council Plans*

The situations and experiences herein described were developed as part of a supervisory program in a large rural school district near Salt Lake City, Utah.

There are seventeen elementary schools in the district ranging in size from a one-teacher school with twelve children in attendance to a large elementary school with six hundred children and twenty teachers. There are 175 teachers; seventeen principals, five of whom teach; one music supervisor; and one general elementary supervisor.

The present supervisor who came to work in the district three years ago recognized cooperative effort as the way of real progress. She believed that all persons concerned with working in a program should share in planning it.

As an experiment in cooperative supervision to free teachers to use their own initiative and to avoid any imposition of a ready-made program, the activities described in the following paragraphs were set up.

An elementary-school council consisting of twelve classroom teachers, four principals, two supervisors, and the superintendent was organized as an advisory group. The group met every two weeks during the school year and discussed many problems of general concern to the school program. The following purposes and needs for the organization were given in a final report which was sent to each teacher in the district:

1. Concepts of the function of supervision are changing. It is no longer considered to be the prerogative of a supervisor to impose ready-made programs on classroom teachers, to dictate plans or policies, but rather to give guidance to teachers in interpreting ideas of good education and implementing them into actual classroom practice. School programs and plans for practice should be made by the people who are making them work; hence there should be opportunity for planning and discussion of common problems by the group concerned.

2. Our greatest concern in America today is to safeguard and save the ideals of democracy as a way of life for the people of our country now and in the future. Schools of America share heavily in this responsibility; yet many of us do not really understand practical democracy. In the schools of our country, generally, democracy has not been practiced. Representation, participation, and cooperation are all basic tenets of democracy. These concepts are also indispensable in the development of school programs.

3. Because of conflicting viewpoints which exist in the field of elementary education, there is need for schoolworkers to learn to think together. It is not necessary that they think alike, nor think the same things—differences are wholesome and necessary to progress. Uniformity in school programs is deadly, but unity of basic ideas is most desirable. We school people need to exchange ideas; to speak freely about things we believe without fear; to learn how to differ agreeably, objectively, impersonally, and without hurt; to be tolerant of the ideas of others even when we disagree; to see all sides of any question we raise; to accept or reject ideas or proposals on the basis of the best and most critical thinking we can do; to develop an experimental attitude toward our work. We are too often prone to hold opinions without a critical basis in thinking; our own experiences and opinions are valuable but they must be constantly validated by study and discussion. Many changes in ways of working with children are coming about as the result of research. We need to keep abreast of change. We must study constantly these trends if we are to keep our thinking and our classroom practice up to date and vital.

Work of the council included (a) an evaluation of the existing program, (b) discussion and formulation of a basic philosophy for use in planning programs in the district, (c) a survey of textbooks and supplies in use, (d) the evaluation and selection of new textbooks, (e) a survey of promotion practices in the district, (f) problems of the elementary schools and the war emergency.

The following statement concerning the council was made by one of the members:

I feel that my experience in participating on the Elementary School Council has brought me definite personal gains. It has given me a greater feeling than ever before of being a part of the district, that belonging feeling which is essential to true democratic living. It has given me a greater understanding and appreciation of other teachers and other schools within the district. It has broadened my educational horizon.

I feel that as a group the council members have grown in ability to think together, to appreciate and understand one another's viewpoints, and to desire to keep in contact with new developments in sound educational movements. We have come to know each other, as well as to understand better our common and our individual problems. Among the members of this group I feel closer understanding between the different parts of the district and between the teachers of different grades.

The effects of the activities of this council upon the whole elementary group of teachers can be better seen next fall and on into the future as the council continues. The work has just begun to bear fruit; its good effects are not immediate. The larger the group involved, in general, the less immediate are its effects, it seems to me. As each teacher participates, either

in giving or receiving from the council, that teacher's feeling of being a real part of this school organization will grow. The feeling of unity within the district will develop as will understanding of each other. The result cannot help being better, more vital teaching.

I would welcome the opportunity at any future time of being a member of this council, but whether or not I am, I intend to cooperate with the movement and expect to see it bring growth in teaching to the teachers of our district.

The most significant single contribution made by the council was on the problem of grouping children for instruction in the elementary school. Study and discussion by the council members resulted in the formulation of a general policy with regard to the practice which was acceptable to all. The following statements summarize briefly the point of view and recommendations made on this problem:

1. Wherever possible a natural social or heterogeneous grouping should be used. So called homogeneous grouping is undemocratic and discriminatory. No group can be truly homogeneous.
2. Grade groupings at best are artificial and arbitrary devices for handling groups of children.
3. Many factors should be considered for each child before placement in a group is made. Careful thought should be given to the problem by the principal, teachers, and parents. Each child should be placed where he is stimulated to do his best work. Academic achievement is only one factor in deciding group placements.
4. Grouping within groups to meet individual needs and interests and abilities of children should be practiced. Groupings should be flexible and frequently changed to avoid stigma. Teachers should avoid naming of groups in any way.
5. More specific and helpful records should be kept and passed from one teacher to the next to help the new teacher understand the children, their needs, abilities, and interests.
6. Teachers well adjusted to groups should stay with them more than one year. This saves time for making adjustments, provides security and continued progress for children, and tends to make teachers more conscious of teaching children than of teaching certain subjects and grades.
7. Platoon or highly departmentalized organization is undesirable in the elementary school.
8. Retentions should be reduced to the minimum.

## Setting the Stage for Planning

MANY school systems have practiced departmentalization to the extent that a teacher feels she is first a member of a department, and secondly, a member of the school. In such cases, there often grows up a rivalry among departments which can and often does discredit the profession. Guiding students in selecting courses which will provide for them the greatest development of potential talent and power is less difficult in systems where the interests of the child and his future are paramount, and where the interest in promoting particular subjects in the department are secondary.

Group planning must necessarily be designed to give no department an advantage, even tho college entrance requirements have often done so. Public schools exist for *all* the children. They have as much responsibility to a child who is to become a plumber as to one who plans to enter medicine. The private school can continue to function for a single purpose, but the public school can scarcely afford to continue to build a program for the few without paying more attention to the many. The school classroom is a place where lessons are assigned in democratic government but where the practice of democracy in the classroom procedure is not nearly so frequently found. An institution that is obliged to train the youth of the nation for democratic living should, itself, be a place where the youth can practice democratic living.

In providing opportunities for group participation, the philosophy of the school executive is important. If he prefers to administer a system on closely divided lines of responsibility, there may be little participation of the members of the faculty. There are many school systems that never make much "fuss and bother" about group planning but at the same time the teachers do a fine job of teaching. In fact, many teachers prefer to be left alone to teach while others plan the work. This position taken by so many teachers makes group planning very difficult. A sympathetic attitude

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By LOY NORRIX, *Superintendent of Schools, Kalamazoo, Michigan*

toward faculty participation on the part of the administrator may result in a good response.

Some schools are attempting to secure participation in curriculum revision, selection of instructional materials, planning the building program, revision of personnel policies, and all planning of a postwar nature, thru the work of representative committees which are given responsibility to study and to recommend. These committees need to be sufficiently representative so that all phases of the problem will be considered. It is customary for some member of such a committee, usually the chairman, to be given time from the regular schedule to coordinate the work of the committee.

Much of the supervisor's time in some systems is spent in meeting with groups of teachers, in which the supervisor is a consultant. In such meetings, the supervisor stimulates thinking and challenges group participation, but the outcome is a result of the contributions of all. Teachers enjoy and welcome supervision that challenges them and can give help on problems which they, not the supervisor, have found to be real.

### *How We Plan*

The writer has held two types of group conferences during the past three years. One consisted of meetings in buildings in which the teachers



*Courtesy of Madison, Wisconsin, Public Schools*

**The plan must be flexible and must develop  
as it is put into action**

gathered to consider their own building problems. Each one was encouraged to submit a problem regardless of its apparent significance to others. The other type of conference consisted of meetings of teachers by elementary-grade groups and by departments in the secondary schools. These two types provided a fine cross section of interest and gave to the administration opportunities to help "clear the track" for teachers.

### *Workshops*

One of the newer methods of learning to work together is the workshop. The first of these held in Michigan was at Ann Arbor, sponsored jointly by the Michigan Secondary-School Study and the University of Michigan. Workshops have now become common in the colleges of Michigan and are operated in some school systems. This method of conducting courses has created a new interest in college work which has great promise. The workshop is not wholly unlike the seminar and methods of study which have been in operation in a few colleges for several years, but it provides more participation in group situations and a greater chance for the interaction of ideas.

### *Before School Begins*

A conference of an entire school faculty is a modern method of in-service training where teachers are learning to work together. Most frequent is the preschool conference, altho midterm and even postschool meetings are not uncommon. The benefits of the preschool conference include: orientation for new members of the faculty; an opportunity for the teachers to list and consider those important educational problems they face; a chance for teachers to learn to work more effectively with pupil groups, and to learn the "bigness" of the teaching profession; an impetus to good morale; and an insurance that no suggestion will be overlooked.

The preschool conference program held at the opening of school in Kalamazoo this year will be described in some detail as typical of group planning and group participation.

Late in the spring of 1944, the writer invited a representative group of the school faculty to meet with him to consider the advisability of such a conference. After two meetings, this committee recommended that such a conference be held and set up a suggested procedure for a two-day meeting. Following approval of the board of education, the two-day meeting was planned. The conference was held on the first two days of school, September 5 and 6.

The first day began with a faculty breakfast in the high-school cafeteria followed by greetings from the superintendent including a brief message on the possibilities of the conference. The membership then divided itself into heterogeneous groups of thirty persons each. These groups met for

an hour to list the important educational topics which were to be discussed in the two-hour discussion meetings to be held in the afternoon.

Following these group meetings in the morning, the faculty heard an address on "Community Awareness." The speech was specially planned to stimulate the thinking of teachers on community problems.

In the afternoon, the faculty divided itself along interest lines into small groups to discuss those issues coming out of the morning meetings.

On the second day of the conference, teachers met in the different school buildings and followed much the same procedure during the morning session as on the previous day. Most of the second day's discussion, however, centered around building problems. In the afternoon of the second day, most of the elementary-school teachers spent the time in their rooms studying records or meeting in small groups to consider common problems. In general, the afternoon session was a preparation for the reception of students who were to report the following morning. Secondary-school teachers met in small department groups but followed much the same procedure.

Typical of the many reports which came from members of the faculty concerning this conference is this statement from an elementary teacher:

I want to express my deep appreciation for one of the finest experiences of my professional career. True, I had felt no previous need for a renewal of faith in the democratic ideals, but Tuesday and Wednesday deepened my appreciation and belief in the democratic way of life. The thing that most impressed me during these two days was the earnest participation of each person in every single group which I was in. The organization of the groups without regard for department lines cannot help improving the relationships of all of us.

When teachers learn to plan and work together, both the teacher and the student will profit.

## We All Plan

THE LOCAL teachers association in River Forest, Illinois, has been in existence for a number of years. Its effectiveness as an instrument for group planning has become better recognized and more frequently used in recent years. The teachers council and the various committees serve the teachers, principals, specials (formerly called supervisors), and superintendent in bringing action on problems with which the personnel become concerned, and which range from minor items, such as the distribution of holiday periods on the school calendar to salary schedule revisions and curriculum development plans.

The constitution of the association provides that:

The purpose of the organization is to insure greater unity of thought and action in providing the best possible educational opportunities for the children of the community, and that working through its officers and Advisory Council it shall assist the superintendent in the formation and execution of educational policies and practices.

Group planning may be strongly favored by the teaching and administration personnel and still be rather weak and ineffective in the school system when applied in the classrooms, assemblies, teachers meetings, principals staff conferences, and in superintendent-teacher relationships, unless there has been established by the administration and the board of education a definite policy in board regulations recognizing the importance of cooperative group planning.

The River Forest Board of Education has adopted and followed a definite policy with reference to planning by educational groups among the professional staff and participating lay groups. The following code of policy and practice is taken from the minutes of the River Forest Board of Education:

**RESOLUTION CONCERNING COOPERATING EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
IN THE RIVER FOREST SCHOOLS**

Recognizing the growing importance of public education in American democracy, and being in complete agreement with the point of view that

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By VIRGIL M. ROGERS, *Superintendent of Schools, River Forest, Illinois*

the schools should remain close to the people, and that they should maintain constant contact with all elements in the community; and accepting the principle that all concerned with the work of public education—pupils, parents, and teachers—should have a part in developing the educational policy in the schools; we, the members of the Board of Education of River Forest, hereby go on record endorsing the instruments of democratic cooperation now functioning in our educational Policies Council of the General Parent-Teacher Association, the Teachers' Association and Teachers' Council, the Engineer-Custodians' Association, and the Village-Wide Student Council.

As a board, we wish to encourage study, discussion, and active participation by all concerned through their several organizations in the promotion of the best possible program of education for our community. We believe that effective education for democratic living takes place only when adequate provision is made for actual practice of democratic action.

In recognizing the above mentioned cooperating organizations in the educational program of the River Forest Schools, and by encouraging their active participation in educational policy-making, we wish to make it clear that in no way does the Board of Education wish to escape its responsibility to the citizens of the community as the official governing body responsible to the people for a final decision on all matters of policy and educational programs.

Under the statutes of the State of Illinois the Board assumes its full responsibility in all matters relating to the program of public education in the village of River Forest, and invites fullest cooperation from all groups through suggestion, discussion, and recommendation, reserving to itself the right and the obligation to make final decisions based upon available evidence on all matters affecting the educational program carried on in public schools of River Forest.

The superintendent becomes one of the group in faculty, advisory council, or committee deliberations, and thereby places upon all members of the staff the responsibility to share in whatever phase of educational planning is under consideration. The genuinely democratic atmosphere which such informal group planning creates has been described by the author elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

### *Group Planners at Work*

#### *Planning for Better Reporting*

The question was raised at a general teachers association meeting as to the effectiveness of our system of grading and reporting to parents on pupil progress. Questions came up about the "satisfactory" and "unsatisfactory" markings currently employed and about the use of any form of written statement to parents. After much discussion, it was proposed that an evaluation committee be formed to study the problems and report to the faculty. The committee was appointed originally by the superintend-

<sup>1</sup> Rogers, Virgil M. *Cooperative Practices in Educational Administration*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944. p. 71-72. (Unpublished thesis.)

ent, but more recently all teachers committees have been named by a committee on committees elected by the faculty and representing all elements.

Eventually, the evaluation committee brought its report to the faculty for discussion. Many suggestions were made, and out of the various meetings came an experimental program—developed cooperatively with parents in the several schools—whereby no marks would be given and no report cards would be used; instead a comprehensive file would be kept on each child, and this would be referred to when parents were invited to a conference at least twice during the year.

In the three years of experimentation, changes have been made which greatly improved the technic, including the development of a minimum list of materials to be placed in the cumulative folder, a guide sheet for parent interviews with space for recording results of conferences, better use of test data, development of effective interview or conference technic, and various other improvements which have been adopted or rejected by the faculty as experimentation proceeded. Not everyone has been enthusiastic about the agreements arrived at thru group planning, but serious objections are not raised because everyone understands and approves of the procedure employed in setting up this new plan of evaluating and reporting pupil progress. Incidentally, the success and permanency of the policy has been due in considerable measure to the care exercised by the staff to have parents participate in all of the planning.

#### *Developing a New Salary Schedule*

It is not difficult to plan for group participation in matters touching teacher welfare; however, this is an area in which for several reasons boards and superintendents seem to manage with little participation by the faculty. Possibly this accounts in some measure for the continued reputation we bear of being the "shabby genteel profession" whose members, as one prominent administrator recently remarked, "should teach for the joy of teaching and not for the salary" notwithstanding the fact that his salary was approximately five times the average teacher's salary.

The first suggestion that the salary schedule adopted in depression days had outlived its usefulness and that it should be drastically revised came from a principal. The question was discussed in the teachers council and taken to the general teachers group where the superintendent was requested to present his point of view and any pertinent financial data helpful in the study of this problem. The planning which followed showed keen understanding of effective group action. A committee was appointed to study the problem, to work with the administration and board in gathering the facts, and to report to the faculty. One important phase of the planning was to arrange with lay groups in each school community in the

system to discuss the salary situation in relation to the cost of living in the community and in relation to the social worth of the job of the teacher in the community. Arrangements were also worked out for the teachers committee to confer with the educational advisory council, which represents the lay and teacher groups in educational planning.

Space will not permit a detailed description of the numerous steps taken leading to the presentation to and adoption by the board of a salary schedule generally considered to be one of the best ever adopted in the state. The main point is that the new schedule was accepted with only slight modifications and came as a result of an entire faculty personnel carefully working and planning each step so that all facts were clear and parents were aware of the need and were ready to support the board when it acted. This sort of cooperation comes only when the elements concerned are in the habit of group planning in classroom, in school building, and on a systemwide basis.

#### *Strengthening Professional Ethics*

Some of the teachers had discussed in an informal way in a small group the need for constantly reminding ourselves of the importance of ethical practices in all professional relationships. One had read in the *Journal of the National Education Association* the warning issued thru an article by the chairman of the National Commission on Professional Ethics of the letdown in ethical standards in teacher employment because of the war shortage of teachers. The matter was presented at the teachers council as something of importance for us to consider. After much discussion the following points were drawn up covering areas of ethical practice in which our group, in the opinion of the council, seemed to need some reminding. It should be pointed out here that during the entire discussion the superintendent was out of town and had no influence upon the deliberations.

This statement was discussed and accepted by the faculty following the council deliberations:

1. Loyalty and mutual aid within the teaching group are essential to successful work.
2. It is democratic and ethical to abide by the decision of the majority and to present a united front on controversial topics once decisions have been made.
3. It is essential that all confidential material used in parent conferences be kept strictly confidential.
4. Each member of the staff is obligated to avoid making statements as members of the teaching profession, and as members of the River Forest school faculty, which may be misinterpreted by others.
5. Provision is hereby made for distribution of the NEA Teachers' Code of Ethics to each member of the teaching corps.

This was accomplished without conflict because it represented group action.

### *Teachers Look at Themselves*

The effectiveness of group action may well be illustrated by the evolution of present procedures in the evaluation of teachers in the schools of River Forest. The traditional procedure of formal rating or ranking of teachers was recognized by the teachers and administrative staff as most inadequate. The problem was brought up for consideration in the principals meeting by the superintendent, and from there it was presented to the teachers council and finally taken to the teachers association for consideration. Some wanted no evaluation, others felt that there should be definite evaluation of all personnel, and that specific evaluative criteria should be determined by the superintendent and board of education. The majority agreed upon a procedure of evaluation to be developed by the teachers and approved by the administration and board. It took two years of group discussion, committee work, revision, and refinement before an acceptable program of "Growth Through Evaluation" was adopted.

The basic criteria finally accepted for the evaluation of teaching are to be used for stimulating growth rather than for purposes of rating. Constant appraisal of educational growth by all, with the major emphasis on self-appraisal, is the principle upon which the evaluative criteria rest. In arriving at the evaluation statement now in effect, certain fundamental assumptions were generally accepted as a consequence of group discussion. They are:

1. Evaluation of educational growth in our schools is a continuous process, participated in by pupils, teachers, parents, principals, superintendent, and board of education.
2. Evaluation is necessary under the teachers' code of ethics, is demanded by the state tenure act, and is called for in the rules and regulations of the board of education.
3. Evaluation cannot be accomplished on a rating basis. The procedures employed must be understood and accepted by those affected by the process if best results are to be realized.
4. Evaluation is a complex process and should begin when the applicant is being considered for a teaching position, and end only when one's professional relations with the schools are discontinued.
5. Evaluation procedures employed must be so used that consistent growth in the total school program will be realized.

As might have been expected, there was criticism of the criteria finally accepted by the faculty. Now that they are being employed, there are those who find them "too rigid" and "stultifying"; while others have experienced regret over the lack of "objectivity" in the instrument.

The effect of democratic planning as a group in developing these criteria has been all to the good. Everyone feels definitely one way or the other about the evaluation program, and most will be ready to participate in the process of revision at the end of the trial period.

### Ideas Grow During Planning

In addition to the group planning projects described above, the teachers, principals, specials, and superintendent have carried thru to completion numerous other projects some of which are listed here.

1. Development of a statement of point of view in the form of a philosophy of education for our schools.
2. A plan for continuous curriculum development.
3. A plan for school-owned textbooks and student rental system.
4. A plan for home-school cooperation with an educational advisory council assisting with the development of educational planning.
5. Establishment of junior Kindergartens (for four-year-old children) as a regular part of the school system.
6. Establishment of provisions for leave of absence for advanced study on pay after four years of teaching, bonus payments for approved college study at the rate of twenty dollars per quarter hour, and twenty-two days' sick leave annually for all members of the teaching corps.

Group planning by the entire personnel during recent years in the River Forest schools has more than justified itself. It is true that much of the planning has been done without the complete cooperation of all. Instances are numerous where individuals more or less "dragged their feet" because they misunderstood or were not interested in democratic procedures. There have been numerous occasions when the administration despaired of reaching even an approximate goal set up by the faculty in group planning; however, most of those who have experimented over the past three or four years would probably agree that the most successful method of realizing worthwhile objectives in modern teaching is thru group planning in all areas.

New and interesting projects are under way now, and the years immediately ahead will provide further opportunities for experimentation in this important field of educational administration.



## Broadening Horizons Thru Planning

**H**OW MAY WE PROVIDE authentic, live information about the Far East to the teachers of our community? What local resources are available for this purpose? In turn, how may such information be passed on to teachers in the nation at large? These were questions which agitated the minds of public-school teachers and administrators as well as staff members of the U. S. Office of Education in Washington, D. C., during the fall of 1942 and the spring of 1943 when, as never before, the educational profession began to realize the importance of the Far East to the peoples of the United States of today and tomorrow.

Preliminary meetings at which local public-school teachers and administrators from elementary, secondary, and teacher-training schools, both white and Negro, were in attendance, quickly revealed a readiness on the part of all to canvass local resources to discover ways of developing fruitful learning experiences. A planning committee was organized, consisting of the superintendent of schools of the District of Columbia, the presidents of Wilson and Miner teachers colleges, classroom teachers, and representatives of the U. S. Office of Education. This committee was authorized to think thru the problems involved and to act in behalf of the teachers of the District of Columbia.

At no time was it suggested that separate experiences should be provided for majority and minority group teachers. The common need for authentic information about an important area of the world afforded a welcome opportunity for cooperation on the part of all.

A preliminary canvass revealed that there were many community resources available for a study of the Far East, such as rich collections of art materials and help from well-informed specialists on the various countries of the Far East and staff members of foreign embassies.

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By C. O. ARNDT, *Senior Specialist in Far Eastern Education, U. S. Office of Education, Washington, D. C.*

*Chinese Life thru Chinese Art*

It was decided to begin with art, using the resources of the Freer Gallery of Art. The director of Freer Gallery was asked to conduct a series of three lectures with discussion periods on the subject of Chinese art. The Freer Gallery houses one of the best collections of Chinese bronzes in this country, and the director is a recognized scholar and lecturer on the art of China.

The request of the public-school teachers of the District of Columbia was kindly received. The director of Freer Gallery invited the planning committee to meet with him in his office to consider the project further. After considerable discussion by all those present, it was agreed that emphasis was to be placed on the development of an understanding of Chinese life thru Chinese art. The Freer auditorium was made available for the meetings, and at the conclusion of the lectures staff members of the gallery offered their services to teachers who wished to raise questions about the art objects.

The following paragraph from the 1943 annual report of the Freer Gallery of Art makes this comment about the series:

In May 1943 three lectures on Chinese culture as reflected in the fine arts were given at the Freer Gallery by the Director in response to the combined request of the United States Office of Education and the acting superintendent of the public schools of the District of Columbia, in furtherance of their plan to disseminate knowledge of China in the public schools. The audiences were composed of Washington teachers (total number 264). The subject of the lectures were as follows: May 8: A short discussion of art in general. China and her people. May 15: Bronze and jade. Purpose and use. May 22: Chinese painting.

The initial lecture and discussion series had proved (a) that local school administrators and teachers representing the majority and minority groups could plan and carry thru desirable educational experiences for their constituents, and (b) that the teachers of the District would support a program of in-service education derived from local community resources.

The happy outcome of this initial experiment was that the planning committee in charge of the series soon met to evaluate what had been achieved thru the first series of lectures and to discuss the possibility of a second series for the school year 1943-44. Every member of the committee favored continuation of the lecture series, tho the area upon which the series should center was not at once clear. A number of meetings were held at Wilson Teachers College, Miner Teachers College, and the U. S. Office of Education to which staff members of the participating institutions and agencies were invited. The two local teachers associations, the Education Association of the District of Columbia, and the Columbian Educational Association which had supported the first lecture series,

expressed willingness to take an active part in planning and supporting the new series. Their willingness to help was welcomed by all. Thus, a broad and strong base was established for the work which lay ahead.

### *Introducing the Peoples of the Far East*

Lengthy discussion about the content or theme of the lecture series resulted in the decision that attention should be centered on the peoples of the Far East. Such homely questions were to be answered as: How do these people make a living? What do they eat? What do they wear? What are their religious beliefs, their superstitions, their pastimes? In turn, their systems of education, their folklore and song were to be described. Emphasis was to be placed upon the basic similarities among peoples with respect to the working out of such universal problems as making a livelihood and rearing a family. Differences, too, were to be given due consideration.

In order to facilitate follow-up work in the classroom, it was decided to prepare selected references for teachers on each country which was included in the series. A curriculum committee made up of staff members of Miner Teachers College, Wilson Teachers College, and the U. S. Office of Education was set up and asked to prepare a list of reliable books, pamphlets, films, recordings, maps, and units of study on the various peoples and countries dealt with in the series.

### *From Japan to Thailand*

The theme of the lecture series was agreeable to all and curriculum materials were generally wanted, but who would be the speakers? No money was available for honoraria or cash expense items except the limited funds supplied by the individual participating colleges and educational agencies. This did not prevent the attempt on the part of the committee in charge to obtain the best-informed authorities as speakers for the series from the very outset. In fact, it was believed that the most informed speakers and authorities in the field would be the best prospects because of their understanding of the importance of the work. This assumption proved to be well founded as the following list of speakers and topics for the second series of lectures reveals:

*January 6: "The People of Japan" by Joseph C. Grew, former ambassador to Japan*

*January 24: "Japan in the Postwar World" by Sir George Sansom, K.C.M.G., E.E., and M.P., formerly commercial counsellor in the British Embassy, Tokyo*

*February 7: "The People of China" by the Honorable Walter H. Judd, congressman from Minnesota*

*February 21: "China in the Postwar World" by George E. Taylor, executive officer, Far Eastern Department, University of Washington*

*March 6: "The People of the Philippines" by Colonel Carlos P. Romulo, secretary of information and public relations, Commonwealth of the Philippines*

*March 20: "The People of Thailand" by M. R. Seni Pramoj, minister of Thailand.*

The opening lecture of the series by former United States Ambassador to Japan, Joseph C. Grew, filled the auditorium of the Department of the Interior, which seats about nine hundred people. Any misgivings which anyone might have had about the plan proved unfounded. A more important problem was to find free of charge a suitable auditorium with a larger seating capacity. A quick check showed that the departmental auditorium on Constitution Avenue and Twelfth Street was available. Its seating capacity is about fourteen hundred. The demand for tickets soon reached the two thousand mark for each lecture.

The following procedure was adopted for each lecture: the introduction of the speaker for the evening by alternating chairmen, the address, the question period, the distribution of reference materials at the close of the meetings.

To the end that a larger audience of teachers in the field might be reached, a monograph containing the six lectures, suggestions for teachers as to procedure in developing Far Eastern studies in the classroom, and reference lists of curriculum materials will be published by the U. S. Office of Education during the spring of 1945. Copies of this monograph may be had by writing to the office in Washington.

### **Russia to Korea**

A meeting held by the planning committee at the close of the second series showed the committee to be as much gratified as it had been after the conclusion of the first series. It was convinced that, not only the District of Columbia schools, but the teachers of the nation as well could and should be rendered this service. To this end, various outlets were to be sought, including that of printing and, if possible, radio broadcasts. The planning committee, moreover, decided to offer a series of lectures each year as long as the interest of the teachers and the community would continue. The long-term lecture program, it was thought, might be entitled "Introducing the Peoples of the World," with yearly attention given to that area of the world which in the opinion of the planning committee was thought to be most important at the time.

In planning for a third series the committee decided to "go to the people" for advice and direction. A poll was conducted of the persons who had largely constituted the audience for the second series, with the vote being equally divided between a series on Far Eastern peoples and one on Latin America. After several meetings it was decided to complete the study of

the peoples of the Far East in the fall series and to give consideration to another area of the world in the following year.

The search for speakers again revealed that the most competent men were most ready to serve. By early fall arrangements had been completed for the following program of lectures:

*October 24: "The People of Russia" by Admiral William H. Standley,  
United States Navy, retired, former ambassador to Russia*

*November 7: "The People of the Netherlands East Indies" by Raymond  
Kennedy, associate professor of sociology, Yale University*

*November 21: "The People of India" by Horace I. Poleman, chief, Indic  
section, division of Orientalia, Library of Congress*

*December 5: "The People of Korea" by J. Kyuang Dunn, secretary of  
public relations, United Korean Committee in America.*

Reference to reliable sources of information about the four countries included in the third series will again be prepared and made available to teachers in the field thru the U. S. Office of Education. Copies may be procured by teachers free of charge upon writing to the office in Washington.

### ***What We Had Learned***

There are in each community resources which teachers can employ for educational purposes. These resources, whether material or human, are of unique value to teachers because of their accessibility to, and interest in, the local community. They can often be had for the asking, the best informed resource people being among those most ready to serve.

The study of a large and important educational problem, such as understanding the peoples of the Far East, affords an excellent opportunity for all teachers of the community to work together toward common goals. The largeness and importance of the problem studied causes stereotypes of long duration to be forgotten in the desire to do a constructive job well.

The teachers of a given local community have responsibilities toward their colleagues in the larger national community. The benefits of local endeavor should be made available to the profession as a whole.

The democratic process provides the best means for enabling teachers to work toward the solution of local problems and, in turn, national problems.

## Administration Takes a Step Forward

ONE PRACTICE with which we have experimented for approximately ten years is having teachers decide how money available for salary increases should be distributed. The opportunity to participate in this area has probably done more than any other one thing to convince teachers that they have a part in dealing with administrative problems whose solutions really matter.

Thru the years as teachers have helped decide salary problems, refinements in procedure, plus growth of teachers and administrators, have brought about changes which we consider as some evidence of the value of democratic practices. At first the superintendent told the teachers committee in the spring how much money was available for salaries, and they understood little else of the school's financial status. Now an increasing number of teachers, tho still fewer than is desirable, enter into frequent discussions on the total problem of financing schools in Springfield; and the superintendent considers with teacher groups such problems as how large a surplus should be maintained, or what the probable revenue from various sources will be.

### ***The Plan for Salary-scheduling Grows***

Another significant change is in the factors which the teachers committee considers in planning distribution of salary increases. At first its sole criterion was fairness to teachers whose status differed. Here, however, are quotations from the committee's statement of purposes last spring:

To consider the best interests of the community by providing for teachers a standard of living which will attract and retain efficient instructional services.

To provide incentives for continued teacher growth.

Salary plans presented during the first few years represented the thinking of the committee only. Occasionally a few bold souls protested that their

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By HARRY P. STUDY, *Superintendent of Schools, Springfield, Missouri*

interests had not been adequately considered, but their fellow teachers tended to look upon them as insubordinate or at best unappreciative of the committee's efforts. Last year the committee's first step was to request written statements of injustices which any teacher recognized in the existing salary plan. When the committee and the administration had tentatively agreed on a plan, and each teacher had had time to study its application, members of the committee met each school faculty for discussion. The purpose was to consider not merely whether individual teachers were satisfied but how effectively policies which the committee had tried to incorporate in the plan had been achieved. Some changes resulted from discussions in these meetings.

In the beginning, teacher participation extended thru the stages of preparing the salary distribution plan and presenting it to the board of education. From then on it was the superintendent's business. If the application in some cases was not clear, the responsibility for interpretation was his alone. If a teacher were dissatisfied, whether the case was debatable or not, the superintendent alone assumed responsibility for justifying her salary. During the past few years, however, a number of procedures have been used for enabling the committee to share responsibility for the degree of satisfaction which resulted from salary distribution.

The changes that have taken place during ten years of experimentation with cooperative salary planning are in the direction of increasing shared thinking and shared responsibility. Because we believe these to be the essence of democracy, we feel our experiment with teacher participation in salary planning is successful.

### ***Teachers Take a Hand in Planning In-service Education***

It is a long step forward in the democratic process when teachers voluntarily go beyond the limits of immediate problems and establish policies and initiate action dealing with their own professional growth. In recent years there have been numerous indications that teachers in Springfield have taken that step.

The professional growth committee, with a member representing every school in the city, is a standing committee of the community teachers association. The activities of this committee were at first limited to the planning of meetings in which problems were discussed in study groups. The continuous extension of the work of this committee as it has engaged in ventures in teacher education new to Springfield shows how initiative is developed by responsibility.

In the summer of 1940, the professional growth committee undertook a practical community study. Questionnaires were sent out to all teachers in the system asking them to list the places which they would like to visit. The committee prepared booklets containing pertinent data and listed

problems and social concepts to be considered in relation to the trip. More than one hundred teachers participated in the tours. A follow-up study in the fall showed that teachers utilized the information gained thru the study in planning community trips with pupils, and that even when trips could not be carried out, teachers' backgrounds for community study had been vastly enriched.

Two years later, in the fall of 1942, the professional growth committee instituted a plan for monthly interbuilding meetings to be held at a centrally located school during the afternoon and evening. This plan not only provided a convenient time for general teachers meetings and for meetings of committees, but also offered opportunities for meetings of special interest groups and for dinner meetings at which teachers of all grade levels could meet socially and enjoy programs provided by various groups.

The community teachers association in 1942 and again in 1943, thru a special workshop committee, sponsored a six-week summer workshop under the direction of Northwestern University. Approximately one hundred teachers attended the workshop each summer. When, because of unpredictable wartime conditions, the project incurred a deficit, the association, by a vote of its membership, assumed the obligation and paid the deficit even tho the board of education had issued a guarantee for the expenses of the workshop.

#### *A Committee Helps Select New Teachers*

For a number of years, the superintendent consistently sought the help of supervisors and principals both in interviewing applicants and in judging their all-round fitness for teaching positions. About eight years ago, a personnel committee was formed to share in the highly technical job of teacher selection. The membership includes administrators, supervisors, and teachers from all instructional levels. The superintendent appoints supervisors and principals; the community teachers association, the teachers.

The work of the personnel committee includes such functions as these: securing the names of prospective applicants to be invited for interviews; planning the time and place of such interviews and arranging for publicity in regard to them; studying ways of conducting interviews in order to offer the greatest values both for applicants and for the school system; choosing appropriate examinations and conducting them; writing statements that summarize committee judgment on each applicant in such a way that specific reasons are made clear for recommendation to elect, to place on reserve lists, or to reject.

From the administrative point of view such a committee might easily prove a more cumbersome way of getting an important job done than a more direct but less democratic procedure. Without doubt, however, the work of the personnel committee affords an excellent medium for teacher

growth, the chief goal of democratic administration. The many divergent views held by members of the group are constantly subjected to clarification and modification. It is a two-way proposition. Thru active participation on the part of all, encouraged by the easy informality which characterizes committee sessions, teachers not only contribute their own ideas and weigh them in the light of their own reactions to the suggestions of others, but they also gain new ideas and impressions. Thus each teacher's educational philosophy is constantly being revised and broadened.

The easy informality also breaks down feelings of vested interests engendered by compartmentalization within a school system. When a junior high-school teacher listens to the opinion of a primary teacher in regard to an applicant for a junior high-school position, or a senior high-school principal evinces understanding of elementary problems by his evaluation of an applicant for that level, each individual feels added respect for the thinking of the other. The value of the idea counts rather than the position or rank of the individual.

Another phase of the committee's work contributing to teacher growth is the practice of visiting teachers on the job before final selections are made. Since many applicants for positions in Springfield teach in near-by towns, it is possible for teams of two or three committee members to observe them in action and report impressions to the whole committee. Needless to say, this is a broadening experience for all who participate.

Further evaluation of the work of the personnel committee also reveals growth on the part of board members and the community. There was a time in Springfield, as in other communities, when teacher selection was not considered to be primarily a professional function. It was common practice for friends and relatives to urge the employment of teachers on a personal basis. Now, however, the community has become accustomed to teacher selection by a professional committee and board members recognize the importance of professionalizing that function.

Inherent within a democratic procedure of teacher selection is one benefit which has value both for the school system and for incoming teachers. Even before they begin their local teaching, new teachers are introduced to one important area of democratic practice and to some dominant strands of the school system's evolving philosophy. Such a preview of important factors in their future environment should prove helpful.

Perhaps the most important contribution the personnel committee has made to progress in democratic practices is the growth achieved in arriving at group judgments based upon shared thinking. Aware of the popular fallacy that decision on the basis of majority vote is the essence of democracy, the group has conscientiously striven toward the ideal of achieving group judgments which represent consensus rather than majority vote. Such an ideal is not easy to reach. Discussions must necessarily be thoro

and time-consuming. Each member of the group must be open minded and ready to modify his opinions in the light of new evidence. The committee certainly does not feel that the ideal has been reached, but probably all the members would agree that definite progress has been made in the direction of the goal.

### *A View of Transition*

The selection of new teachers is but one of the problems related to personnel. We believe we have made greater progress toward democratic practices in setting up procedures for the selection of teachers than in dealing with other personnel problems such as the transfer, promotion, and dismissal of teachers. Springfield's recent developments in these areas may interest other school systems and may also illustrate a way transition takes place from authoritarian to democratic practices in a given area.

Two steps in Springfield's progress toward more democratic practices relating to personnel problems can be described. The first is the use, whenever possible, of informal procedures for getting group thinking about administrative decisions which might otherwise appear to be purely arbitrary. To illustrate, there is the case of the teacher who requested a transfer from a junior high-school to a senior high-school position on the basis of seniority. Considering seniority an unsound basis for teacher placement,



*Courtesy of Long Beach, California, Public Schools*

**Everyone is in on the plan for an extended day program—mother, boys, and principal**

the administrator opposed her transfer. However, he proposed that all the facts be presented to the cabinet of the Community Teachers Association in order that the decision might be tested in the light of group thinking.

The second step is the stimulation of widespread thinking and interchange of ideas concerning basic issues as a prerequisite to the formulation of any important procedure. For several years Springfield teachers, in various informal groupings, have been examining the factors involved in the following issues: What is promotion? How shall teaching success be defined and how can various degrees of success and failure be objectively evaluated? To what extent should teachers assume responsibility for the success or failure of other teachers? Lacking an over-all view of the system and specific knowledge of individual teachers and building problems, to what extent can teachers participate in problems of placement or dismissal? How can we balance consideration for teachers with obligations to children? When groups operate democratically, there must be sufficient weight of public opinion and understanding as a basis of any procedure to insure success. The formulation of informed public opinion is frequently a slow process, but it must be regarded as a necessary step in the transition from authoritarian to democratic procedure in any area of school administration.

### *Postwar Planning Is Everybody's Job*

A reasonable test of democratic administration is the efficiency with which groups use democratic procedures to solve new problems. We have had occasion recently to put our years of experience to this test as the Springfield system has faced the need to do postwar planning.

In the spring of 1943 the superintendent, in conference with members of his central staff and the president of the Community Teachers Association, appointed a committee of four to make a beginning attack on post-war planning.

The committee from the very first had the benefit of outside expert advice because it began its work in conjunction with the second Springfield-Northwestern University Workshop. It early became evident, too, that we needed to draw upon numerous community leaders for information and assistance. Shortly after our committee began its work, it carried out several projects for assembling community opinions. Cooperative meetings were held with the board of education, committee members, and visiting workshop members. Small group meetings were held with representative citizens, and open-forum discussions conducted for the benefit of anyone interested.

Of course, not all of our community contacts were smooth going. Thru conferences and comparing information, however, the committee was able to begin planning a program with which there has been rather general agreement in the community.

The committee soon realized that it would be desirable to have more teachers in on the planning. The enlarged committee included not only teachers and administrators but also representatives from the community at large. Soon after the school year opened in 1943 the faculty of each school, in cooperation with pupil and parent groups, was asked to study educational needs, not only of that particular school but of the entire system. This meant that at least 380 teachers plus scores of parents and hundreds of pupils spent considerable time during the school year thinking about school needs and how our community should meet these needs after the war. The extent to which teachers made constructive suggestions pertaining to schools other than their own was encouraging. Recommendations growing out of these studies were presented to the board of education and the citywide postwar planning committee. Both groups have expressed appreciation and approval.

In addition to the community meetings and forums previously mentioned, the superintendent of schools and the chairman of the postwar planning committee have availed themselves of every opportunity to explain our program to civic groups, clubs, parent-teacher groups, and other community organizations.

During the summer of 1944 a central committee with frequent help from thirty to forty other teachers worked on getting the construction part of the postwar plans ready for an architect. These plans have been submitted to a consulting architect.

Also during the summer of 1944 group meetings reaching over fifty teachers were held to study our postwar curriculum needs and how we might best profit from participation in the Horace-Mann-Lincoln Institute of Experimentation. From these meetings recommendations were sent to the Institute of Experimentation by several staff members in attendance at Teachers College, Columbia University, summer session in New York.

We have tried to make our postwar planning cooperative, on-going, and comprehensive. We have endeavored to do our planning in the light of community attitudes and possibilities and also within the framework of other communitywide planning. It is frequently asserted that democratic processes, tho they may have other values, are necessarily slow and bungling. We offer our experience in postwar planning as evidence that, with sufficient opportunity to practice the ways of democracy, groups can achieve efficiency in solving problems even when one test of efficiency is the ability to reach concrete solutions with reasonable speed.

We have tried to show that in matters of finance, professional growth, selection of teachers, and postwar planning, as well as in numerous other areas, democratic administration has become within a period of eight or ten years a working principle of the Springfield public-school system.

We have tried to indicate that development necessarily takes place at different rates in different areas and that constantly deepening concepts of democracy should be a concomitant. We have come to believe that the growth of democracy is in direct proportion to the growth of those who participate in its practices.

PART

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## Principles of Group Planning



*Courtesy of Santa Monica, California, Public Schools*

Individual talents contribute to the group plan

## Principles of Cooperative Group Work

THE PRINCIPLES of cooperative group work describe those operational elements, those basic activities, which indicate in lowest common denominator terms that group work of this sort is going on. This yearbook deals not with any and all cooperative planning and action but with cooperative planning and action that are democratic. Cooperation among the members of groups is necessary in any society that does not break down completely into chaos. Fascist states and absolute monarchies support group planning and cooperative action. When such activity is democratic, however, it is from the very beginning and thruout the process a consequence of *group* decisions based upon free discussion.

Among the illustrations of cooperative group work that are reported in the preceding chapters, it is probable that a number were not democratic in the sense of the distinction just made. That members of a group work together upon some aspects of an enterprise is not at all exceptional. This has been going on in school classes and within teaching groups since the memory of man. To imply that each instance represents democracy in miniature is misleading—altho understandable. Many adults value democracy without having given very much thought to the sort of behavior that the word implies.

In general there are two ways to arrive at the principles or the principal elements of any activity. One is by deduction, starting with one or more definitions and inferring the principles that are logically implied. A second method is to study a number of illustrations of the activity and infer from these what seem to be common elements. Both of these ways of arriving at principles have value and both are employed in the planning and writing of this chapter. In general, however, the author leaned more heavily upon the inductive approach—inferring principles from practices rather than from definitions. This means that the specific instances of cooperative group planning and action described in the preceding chapters were read carefully and their common elements noted. As a consequence there are given

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below two categories of principles. The first five are those that seem to define the very essence of this democratic and cooperative method of group work. Two additional generalizations, numbers six and seven, are added because they seemed to have important implications.

It is worth noting here that a rather large number of these illustrations are described so tersely as to include little if any reference to actual procedure. The median length of all of the "cases" is less than four hundred words. Such short descriptions always tend to emphasize achievement rather than process. Three or four of the more detailed expositions are exceptions to this generalization. Mr. Smucker's description of the hosteling trip taken by the eleventh-grade boys and girls of the Ohio State University School was sufficiently detailed to illustrate a number of important principles of procedure.

### *The Principles Are These:*

1. *The goals must be such that group activity will expedite their attainment.*

Many satisfactions can be achieved, much worthy and educative work can be done in a highly individualistic manner. The illustrations which appear in the chapters do not and should not argue for group activity to meet any and all needs. Forcing certain types of work into a pattern, so as to involve a group, caricatures an approach that under many circumstances is decidedly valid. A great number of the cynical comments about democratic activity result because teachers and others demonstrate their devotion to group planning by "voting" on everything.

In theory, the criteria which should be applied to determine the advisability of group rather than individual planning and action are rather obvious. They are implied by affirmative answers to these questions:

1. Is the goal contemplated one sought by all members of the group?
2. Does achievement of the goal by a group as such add to its desirability?
3. Do the means required to achieve the goal use the varied talents of a number of individuals?

Mr. Smucker's report of the hosteling trip illustrates these criteria nicely. First a decision was reached to take both a long and a short trip, which meant that the pupils were almost unanimous, as a group, about the desirability of going on the hosteling excursions. Second, going as a group had inherent values. The same trip by an individual would have been quite a different thing. For a single person to have taken it by himself would undoubtedly have been a fine experience, possibly even a better test of resourcefulness and persistence for some of the children. In this instance, however, the purposes the pupils had in mind could not have been achieved thru individual trips.

The third question, "Do the means required to achieve the goal use the varied talents of a number of individuals?" was clearly answered affirmatively in Mr. Smucker's description. A large number of very specific accomplishments were necessary—studying maps, arranging for food, writing letters to parents, servicing bicycles, presenting the plan to the faculty, and so on. Many of these specific tasks were such as to be most expeditiously performed by individuals who received only very general directions from the group but reported back to it specifically and in detail what they had done.

In a fundamental sense, the only rational justification of cooperative group activity is a pragmatic one. It must lead to greater satisfactions for the members of the group than any feasible alternative procedure. To insist upon cooperative planning and action because of a theoretical or sentimental devotion to democracy is only possible in situations where the one insisting has sufficient "ex officio" power to impose his will. This is the case in the classroom or in a faculty if the teacher or administrator is the one with democratic leanings. The principal who said, "I insist that we behave democratically in this instance," was probably revealing more of himself than he suspected. In the long run, children or teachers, when on their own, will *continue* to engage in cooperative group planning and action if they have learned that it gets them more of what they want, broadly defined, faster and more smoothly.

2. *Work is undertaken that is relevant to the goals the group wants to achieve.*

This principle is made explicit or implied in most of the illustrations. The members of the pupil or teacher or community groups were at work upon projects that *they* believed important. This goal attitude is crucial. The individuals as a group wanted something they did not have and they proceeded to go after it in ways that to them seemed efficient.

This principle raises the question as to the origin of these group projects. It is often argued that a basic principle of democratic group activity is violated if someone of somewhat higher "authority status" (teacher or principal) than the other members of the group "suggests" the activity or the goals to be achieved. On the contrary, a classroom which is organized to encourage and utilize group planning will actually provide the kind of machinery which will make good use of all suggestions—whether they come from the teacher, the children, or the morning comic strip.

The important thing in this connection is that the members of the group accept or appreciate or want to attain the goals suggested. This appreciation, it goes without saying, must be genuine. In some cases, because of traditional teacher-pupil or administrator-teacher relations, the degree of genuineness in this sense is difficult to identify. Even without implying insincerity, it is easy for pupils or teachers, depending upon the circum-

stances, to "accept" suggestions made by persons in authority over them.

This point can be clarified by an illustration. As cooperative and democratic group work is understood in this discussion, it is unlikely that such activity is illustrated in the case of fifth-grade children who "work together" finding out about the imports and exports of Brazil. Even tho there may be extended group discussion and some allocating of responsibilities and numerous committees and reports and many worthwhile learnings, it requires too much stretching of the imagination to believe that eleven-year-old boys and girls would place Brazilian economics very high on their "priority list" of concerns. It is not beyond belief that some child in the class may have suggested, "Let's study Brazil," and that the others concurred, even noisily, but the insidious influence of a class in economic geography and the teacher's obvious desires were complicating factors, exerting an unknown influence on all decisions reached.

It frequently happens that a situation originally involving a great deal of cooperative group activity on a project of great concern to everyone ceases to do so because of imposed standards of achievement. A fifth-grade class may want a "room" newspaper badly, and plan and work cooperatively to that end, only to lose interest and turn to something else because their teacher, or some other dominating person, wants fifth-grade children to produce a ninth-grade paper. Many able school administrators interfere similarly with cooperative staff attacks on school problems because of analogous perfectionistic inclinations. They seem to forget that the standards of achievement that count and that actually motivate cooperative group work are the standards accepted by the members of the group.

3. *Activities in cooperative group work are in sequence:* (a) clarification of goals or purposes, (b) consideration of means for the attainment of these goals, (c) action in terms of the means decided upon, and (d) appraisal or evaluation of consequences.

As has been said, most of the illustrations of group activity in the preceding chapters are reported too tersely to bring out these "steps." The "code of conduct" project reported by Miss Merrick; various of Mr. Study's descriptions of cooperative staff work at Springfield, Missouri; Mr. Anderson's description of teacher education workshops; Mr. Arndt's "Far East" project; and Mr. Smucker's chapter on the Ohio State University School's hosteling trip are exceptions.

These phases of cooperative group work as they are named above are apt to imply too much formality. In many cases, the goal of the group activity is from the start so clear and obvious as to need little "clarification." Often however, especially when part of the purpose of group work is to make the process clear and rational, a "clarification" of objectives that is even somewhat labored has merit. The exclamation, "Let's all go to the museum!" might conceivably set off a chain of events that involves much

exciting and valuable group activity, but this activity will be more meaningful and, of course, more educative if the values back of this wish are examined.

It is easy to go too far insisting, or even suggesting, that any formal series of steps be taken in group work. The all-important consideration is to get on with the project at hand and realize its benefits. Any formality should clearly be a means to that end. Pedagogically, the soundest procedure is for the "steps" to emerge from evaluation of a number of projects. The only value in any analysis of procedural sequences is that attention to each often assures more successful work. It is obvious, of course, that each of the four steps is not taken seriatim and cleaned up before the next is approached. Goal clarification, for example, frequently goes on thruout the group activity.

Special mention should be made of "evaluation" because of the frequency with which it is perfunctory or completely neglected. It is not only characteristic of immaturity to spend little time appraising something that is completed. Such neglect is characteristic of adult activities as well, and probably in large measure explains why learning is so slow. Too little time is spent regarding the consequences of actions and relating ends achieved to means employed. Consequently, mistakes are repeated and again not evaluated. If, without stressing formality, the habit can be taught of looking back critically over what was done in a more or less completed cooperative group project, the gain will be great. The value in such reviewing is well illustrated in Mr. Smucker's chapter. Good records of what went on, incidentally, greatly expedite the evaluation process.

*4. There is a free interplay of minds during all stages of the cooperative activity.*

Again, many of the illustrations of cooperative group work were reported too briefly to bring out the importance of this dynamic exchange of experience. Mr. Study's report of the work of the Springfield teachers on salary schedules, and Miss Ryan's description of the Mount Pleasant, Michigan, "Youth Center" were significant exceptions, the latter because it made so clear the importance of having many points of view expressed.

This free interplay of minds is more than mere talk. It is pertinent talk. To engage in such discussions calls for much practice. Exchanging views in a fashion actually to communicate them is hard work. Most children and adults are unaccustomed to discussions that are relevant to a project—that are neither *ad hominem* nor repetitious and that lead to action.

A number of conditions increase the probabilities that this free and uninhibited exchange of views will take place. One is that all members of the group must be peers as persons. This does not mean that they are equal in experience or in the contribution they can make to group activity. Peerage of this sort does mean, however, that influence which is a consequence of

"authority status" is not exercised. The reason for this is clear. To express one's opinions candidly in a group in which one or more members may be in a unique authoritarian position to wreak retribution for these views, is foolhardy and not to be expected as a general practice.

School groups that include teachers and pupils, or teachers and administrators, are almost inevitably groups in which the members are *not* peers as persons. Pupils are realistic. They have learned that teachers can, and do, exercise authority. The concerns of the pupils are rarely if ever paramount; at least so it seems to the pupils. Teachers, too, know that principals and superintendents are not supermen. Their work includes responsibility for making decisions, as individuals, that have specific bearing on the teachers' happiness. These status relationships involving pupils, teachers, and administrators are of long standing. They are part and parcel of our thinking about school operations. We cannot escape them. Even when we try, our very figures of speech give us away, to say nothing of what we do.

Somewhat related to this problem of equality of status as persons within the group, and implied by principle three, is the expectation that in most democratically organized group activities the leaders will "emerge"—they are not designated in advance by authority. It is needless to argue that leadership is important, but the method of identification of leaders is of much pertinence. The reader will recall Mr. Smucker's statement (p. 48), "Fortunately one of the group was an experienced hostler. . . ." Such experienced and effective group members, with special competencies, do actually emerge when the group is concerned with its work and is not, as has been said, structured by authority. Undesirable structuring by authority often results when teachers or administrators, often in the vain hope of expediting matters, appoint a chairman. If the group is working to get something *it wants*, and if the members of the group know one another, the group will use its special talents with reasonable efficiency.

For the members of the group to know one another, both as persons and as students, or as teachers and as administrators, is important. The former kind of acquaintance makes much easier a free exchange of views. If a pupil's friend criticizes his suggestions, the loss of face is minor. Each knows he likes the other despite a difference of opinion. Status is not affected. For the members of a group to know one another's specific "professional" talents contributes immeasurably to the efficient conduction of group activity. The pedagogical limitation in such utilization of specific talents is the perennial one when achieving the group goal is the main thing—those needing the least practice get most of it. The good chairman does all the directing.

5. *A consensus of opinion is striven for.*

The numerous illustrations of cooperative group work appearing in

this yearbook are almost completely free from any reference to voting. Mr. Wilson makes casual mention of parliamentary procedures, but the general neglect of what is to many people the very essence of democracy is more than coincidental. Formal voting does not characterize these co-operative group projects. Action rarely rests upon mere majorities. Part of the process is to reach unanimity, or practical unanimity. Group work cannot be done when a majority coerces a minority. It must *convince* the minority. If such does not happen, and assuming no artificial maintenance of the group as a "class" or "staff," the minority withdraws from the group. It should. It would be stupid to work for purposes not valued and in ways believed to be unwise.

The necessity for having a cooperatively working group eventually "of one mind" in all essentials (this is, of course, an undesirable requirement in a discussion group), has many implications. In the first place, it means that progress will be slower than some members of the group desire. The eleventh-grade pupils in the Ohio State University School spent many days just finding out about hosteling. This must have taxed the patience of some of the young men and women unless special arrangements were made for them.

A second implication is that while group allocation of responsibility to individuals or committees is in the interests of efficiency, the entire group, in order to be kept of one mind, must not only be apprised constantly of what is going on but must know that it can effect what is going on. In other words, responsibility can not only be assigned, it can be withdrawn. The generally observed lack of interest shown by pupils and faculties and other groups in many *ad interim* committee reports is a consequence of two factors: either the activities of the committee as reported have little or no bearing upon the major activity under way, or the major activity under way has little relation to the concerns of the group. The latter is frequently the case when a group project is "assigned."

"Bringing a group along" in this sense is difficult especially if the members are inexperienced in cooperative group activity. Many descriptions of pupil or staff or community group work appear to gloss over this difficulty. Consequently, the impression is given that cooperative planning and action involve few procedural problems when such is decidedly not the case. Many group projects that were undertaken with genuine enthusiasm were subsequently dropped with disillusionment merely because insufficient attention was given to the technics of procedure. These are most effectively learned by experience, but any method of emphasizing their importance is justified.

*In the judgment of the author, these five principles sum up the essence of democratic and cooperative group activity. Two ad-*

*ditional generalizations are discussed below because they seem to apply to most cooperative efforts to achieve group goals.*

**6. Cooperative projects tend to grow out of an existing group structure.**

With the possible exception of Miss Ryan's and one or two other illustrations, every one of the instances of cooperative work reported was undertaken by members of a group already in existence—either as a class or a faculty or a government unit. The alternative sort of group would, of course, be one formed for the express purpose of getting a particular project under way.

While it might be argued that this was inevitable, given the general nature of the assignment that went to the various authors, it is possible that the fact has more interesting implications. In schools, the conventional class or room arrangement imposes a rigidity of organization that almost precludes the spontaneous forming of groups to undertake cooperative work with much intellectual content, or in which teachers are resources and hence apt to know what goes on and be able to report it. In most elementary schools, even play groups adhere to "room" or "grade" lines much more closely than do the more spontaneously formed neighborhood associations.

This condition in schools is somewhat analogous to American society in general. Relatively—that is in contrast to some other cultures—we are a mobile people, but judged by any absolute standards it is difficult to form, and subsequently to dissolve, collections of individuals who have common interest in planning for getting a job done. While it is true that there are in any large population center many special interest groups, either they do not touch the great mass of the people because of communication difficulties or membership is highly selective and in part based upon social considerations.

Very tangible rewards in terms of teaching the skills and attitudes involved in cooperative work would go to those schools that tried to expedite the formation of spontaneous, special-interest groups. Special interest is used here to mean something other than "hobby." The interest should be in achieving some common goal that can be reached more readily by cooperative attack. Advantages are gained, too, if the members of the group can feel no guilt when, after the project is completed, the group dissolves. The fact that new projects grow out of old ones may keep such groups intact longer than was originally contemplated. Social invention is needed at this point, especially as the problem pertains to urban life.

**7. Specific cooperative work projects usually lead to other projects.**

This generalization about cooperative group activity was best illustrated in Miss Fitzpatrick's report. The children in the elementary school

she observed started cooperative work on a *school* clean-up campaign. Out of these activities grew interest in a *home* clean-up campaign and from this emerged interest in *community* improvement. One activity led to another.

It is not surprising that such continuation of activity characterizes cooperative group work as defined here. Experience is continuous and all new interests grow out of preceding ones. Work that represents an assignment is of a different order. An assignment is a circumscribed activity. It is a request to perform certain acts, and, by implication, to quit.

It is often an indication of a degree of coercion with respect to group definition when all members of an original group *decide* to work together again upon a subsequent activity. For example, it is conceivable that most sixth-graders in a particular school might want to plan and work together as a group on a class newspaper, and it is conceivable that from this activity may develop an interest in a "free press" project. It is quite unlikely, however, that exactly the same group that held together and worked on the paper will undertake a study of "free press."

### *Why Hold to Principles?*

The question might well be asked: To what use may a series of generalizations or principles pertaining to democratic and cooperative work be put? Apart from any satisfaction that might come from a better understanding of an important type of activity, the first five of these principles could be used as a set of criteria. Their use in this form would be appropriate if a teacher or administrator wished to determine whether either a single instance of alleged cooperative group work were really so, or the quantity of such activity going on in a school. In either case an answer would be sought to these inquiries which, in question form, summarize the substance of this chapter:

1. Are the goals such that group activity will expedite their attainment?
2. Is the work that is undertaken relevant to the goals the group wants to achieve?
3. Is the sequence of activities somewhat as follows?
  - a. Clarification of goals or purposes
  - b. Discussion of means for the attainment of these goals
  - c. Action in terms of the means decided upon
  - d. Appraisal or evaluation.
4. Is there a free interplay of minds at all stages of the project?
5. Is a consensus of opinion striven for?

## What Group Planning Means

IT MAY BE that a sign of America's coming of age is to be found in the increasing realization that new frontiers of group effort lie ahead. Just as the old ideal man was a hardy pioneer of nature's wilderness, so it could be that today the hardy pioneer of the democratic way of life is the hero in the making.

### *The Social Importance of This Book*

The incorporation of social planning into the whole New Deal program; the most manifest concretion of it in the TVA; governors' planning boards, the establishment by educational agencies of commissions for study and planning; and the postwar planning of many municipalities and institutions—all these are signs of a broad awakening to the importance of thinking ahead. Still more, they are, in many cases, first attempts to think about the human beings who constitute our democracy.

### *The Job of Thinking Together*

The job of thinking together is not an easy one. As our country has grown large in population, territory, and industry, it has broken thru the political and social patterns of an earlier day. These patterns—the town meeting, the amateur in government, the temporary schoolteacher—were useful in a different and earlier time. Now it is not possible for the people of our large cities—the seven million people in New York for example—to come under one roof to deliberate on roads and the care of the indigent. It is not now possible for the untrained man to administer a hundred million dollar budget efficiently. It is not possible for a dear little old man or woman to initiate eager children into all the complexities and fundamentals of modern living. What is required, now, above all in the presence of international and economic anarchy, are devices, organizations, purposes, methods, experiments, and channels thru which a great people can realize its aspiration for freedom. That aspiration for freedom may be defined as

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By H. H. GILES, *Executive Director, Bureau for Intercultural Education, New York, New York*

freedom to grow, to develop the finest capabilities of each person, and to welcome the contributions of every human being to the social good.

If the road to hell is paved with good intentions, it must be sloppy underfoot as the damned wend their way from earth. Good intentions without good works are formless. They are the opposite of solid achievement. Solid achievement requires that intention be crystallized in action, the desire and the device, together. It requires, then, not only a hope, a faith, a purpose, but equally a method, materials to build with, and the day-by-day efforts of men.

And in America we have shown a genius for putting purpose, faith, and devices to work at farming, rearing skyscraping city canyons, and making gadgets on factory production lines. It is past time for us to put our brilliant ingenuity and our great resources to conquering the one single largest obstacle to our greater life and liberty—the lack of know-how; that is, to the job of developing production methods for achieving large-scale participation and social achievement for all of our people.

#### *How Do You Begin?*

The idea of group planning is good. But how do you begin? How early in life can you begin? What evidence is there that it will work? More pertinently, with reference to the present volume, can the school teach social planning and action?

However much it is limited by the social controls which surround it, the school can make a genuine contribution to the solution of these questions. The schools can be at once the laboratories to test practices which are democratic, and the training ground for citizens who will carry these practices into adult life and improve upon them.

We grant that social controls are such that the schools can rarely if ever be pioneers in the realm of social theory. Not schoolteachers but politicians and businessmen made our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. But given the great—almost miraculously great—social ideals of equality, freedom, and opportunity embodied in our national heritage of ideals and government, the school can work its own miracles. They can be miracles of the kind which occur when an ideal is brought to life; when liberty and equality are made concrete and meaningful in even a part of the day-to-day association of people; when during school hours, opportunity for full development and full contribution to the social welfare is made the common experience of the nation's children.

Thus, given the democratic ideal, the fundamentals of education include as paramount, good human relationships—the relationships of administrators to teachers, teachers to children, schools to communities. This adds, at the least, a fourth *R* to those which must be learned. This is the *R* which stands for relationships.

How is it done?

Can it be done by decree from the U. S. Office of Education or the schoolboard or the administrator?

Obviously not, for a proclamation or decree is only an announcement of purpose, not the effectuation of it, especially if it does not embody the desires of the people to whom the decree is directed.

Can it be done by setting up courses of study in human relationships?

Only to the extent that such courses employ methods and materials which deeply affect attitudes and actions.

Is the achievement of liberty and opportunity to be gained by writing the proper textbooks then?

Only to the extent that textbooks can free and excite the minds of readers so that they grow more readily and more continuously.

No! The secret of achieving the maximum growth and social good of *all* is not to be found in decrees or in slogans or in occasional lip service to fine ideals. It is to be found in practice.

Practice, in the field of human relations involves human beings, young and old, rich and poor, malnourished and well-fed, of high and low IQ (whatever it is), and of infinitely varied and constantly changing physique and desires. Thus the practice of democracy is infinitely difficult. It will require the utmost effort to achieve progress toward it. The school which attempts such practice is in for an arduous adventure—arduous, but it is a



*Courtesy of University Demonstration School,  
University of California, Berkeley*

Working and playing together lays a foundation for planning

great adventure, the attempt to embody the world-old striving of all men for a full and happy life. *How do you begin?* By planning. *Who will plan?* All concerned.

This book of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development of the NEA is chiefly an attempt to give examples. It deals with planning in teacher education, among administrators, in high schools and elementary schools, and between teachers and parents. It offers statements from administrators, college professors, the U. S. Office of Education, teachers, a board of education. It includes representation from East and West, North and South. Most of the articles indicate a generally good grasp of planning as a fundamental process of intelligent living and education. The very existence of the book, published by the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development, illustrates the spread of an idea. (It is no great number of years since the whole notion of planning by teachers and children was new and startling to many people in education, including the school principal who said, "You can't get democracy except by autocratic means," and another who said in great distress, "I want to plan democratically with my faculty but I just don't see how," and still another who said, "If we try it (group planning) we must not let the parents know what we are doing.")

### ***The Educational Meaning of Group Planning and Evaluation***

So much then, for the importance of the subject and some of the values of any book issued by a national association devoted to the subject and its illustration.

#### ***Criteria and Principles***

In preparing to make a more specific evaluation of the present volume, as of any "educational" experience, certain criteria were developed inductively. They were derived from two sources: the purposes of democracy, and the facts of personal and social growth. It may be of interest to note them here for comparison with the principles deductively arrived at by Mr. Corey from the contents of the volume. From the first of these sources, the purposes of democracy came:

##### **CRITERION 1: Does the planning described:**

- a. Give opportunity and encourage *all* members of the group to participate in thinking, doing, and evaluating?
- b. Give employment to varied kinds of interest and present ability?
- c. Begin with the question of why planning is important in achieving liberty, equality, and opportunity?

From the second of these sources, scientific evidence regarding the nature of growth, came the following principles and criteria:

*Principle: Every normal human being desires to grow and to learn. We learn by doing.*

CRITERION 2: Does the planning start with *all* members of the group exploring possible subjects, materials, methods, forms of expression, evaluation?

*Principle: Every normal human being has special interests and attitudes.*

CRITERION 3: Does the planning give scope to *individual* interests?

*Principle: Every normal human being wants to "belong," to have status in and recognition by the group.*

CRITERION 4: Is the planning *broad and inclusive* as to subjectmatter, so that it centers on problems or inquiries which are of real importance to all members of the group?

*Principle: For the healthy individual and society, the life process is continuous, and so is growth and education.*

CRITERION 5: Does the group planning lead to continuity, connection with past and future experience? Does the program lead to more seeking, learning, and so forth, and to refinement of skills?

*Principle: Life and growth are not static and absolute in quality. There is constant change and interaction.*

CRITERION 6: Is the planning *itself* and are the things planned *flexible*? Is there evidence of provision for new definitions of purpose and procedure as new elements are met?

*Principle: Human desires and attitudes, like human experiences, are of many kinds. They promote many degrees of understanding and skill.*

CRITERION 7: Does the planning extend to many uses of *many kinds of resources* suited to many interests and skills?

*Principle: Self-confidence is a prime requisite to adventurous, healthy, continuous learning.*

CRITERION 8: Does the planning include ways to *recognize as well as stimulate the contributions* of all to the common purpose?

*Principle: An order, a logic, a form for experience is desired by every person.*

CRITERION 9: Does the planning *itself*, as well as the thing planned, have *order and form*?

The application of such principles and criteria to the present volume have played a part in the development of observations which follow. The first of these will deal with Mr. Corey's statement of principles.

#### *Cooperative Action; Development of Each Individual*

The principles which Mr. Corey has stated in the previous chapter constitute an excellent summing up of the book and incorporate most of the criteria just given. But it must be remembered that Mr. Corey's principles are derived from the contents of this volume plus his own insight. Mr. Corey points out that prime requisites for cooperative action are genuine interest in the project, a belief in each other and in the democratic process, and a desire to make it work. He also points out the way in which democratic groups can set out to achieve what the authoritarians do not attempt—the development of each, thru the cooperation of all.

*Child Goals*

A third point worth special emphasis is that child-chosen goals, honestly arrived at, are different from those imposed—even the skilfully—by an adult. This emphasis is needed because the years of faulty psychological concepts of learning and the resulting and quite generally accepted attempt to force artificial standards upon teachers and pupils have piled up embarrassments for the honest. It is not easy to face *where they are*, even when the teacher believes in starting there. It is still more difficult to face the fact that no two children are identical in background, interests, rates of development, social and academic maturity. It is difficult partly because our well-meaning imposition of grades, minimum essentials, standard tests, classifications by chronological age, and similar methods have put the teacher on the spot. It is easier to impose, drill, and to say the child "failed" the test than it is to seek sensitively and patiently for ways to set children free to undertake tasks truly meaningful, with tools and experiences rich and varied so that everyone can find a way of making a social contribution.

*Flexibility in Sequence*

A fourth emphasis is made upon the fact that the sequence of events in cooperative planning is *not* Herbartian, *not* rigid and formal. In any seriously undertaken enterprise, while initial goals are essential, they change as experience directs. In the development of the fighter plane many changes take place as mechanics and pilots work at the job. Similarly a social ideal or a schoolroom purpose should be allowed to take changing forms as experience accumulates. The intransigence of textbook lessons may be a valid reason why they are distasteful to many pupils.

*The Nonauthoritarian Teacher*

Another matter of fundamental importance in the discussion of the liberation and discipline of abilities thru participation in planning is that the free interplay of ideas—so highly valued by democracy—is not easy where there is one member of the group whose authoritarian rights must always be feared. The implication here is that a good teacher will reduce rather than aggravate the swelling pupil reaction against her mastery. The good teacher will find successively more ways and times in which student thinking and student decisions are recognized (as her own are) for their merit. In this way, for the purpose of destroying artificial authority, attention is focused not on the source but on the validity of ideas. This is also justified by the professional and pragmatic test—Does it work? From the educational development point of view, it is more important that students make a good decision for themselves than that the teacher make an excellent one for them, especially if it is made without their participation and understanding.

*Consensus Versus Majority Rule*

A further extension of democratic participation is stressed by Mr. Corey when he points out that *consensus* is the only means to avert coercion. Concretely this means that the mechanical expedient, so far necessary in dealing with large groups, settling things by majority vote, may imply coercion of minorities which is damaging to the growth as individuals. There is ample evidence that in any classroom consensus, or agreement, can be reached—if only thru an appeal to sportsmanship or the need for immediate decision in order to test the plan. Difficulty almost always arises when a decision is taken as absolute. When it is scientific in the sense of a hypothesis to be tested in action and changed as action proves wise, there are few who will resist. "Let's try it" is a good laboratory slogan. "Let's settle it once and for all" is not.

*Functional Versus Artificial Grouping*

Mr. Corey suggests a further extension of freedom to include opportunity for the formation of interest groups which may cut across class lines, age levels, and subjectmatter boundaries. His argument for this freedom is that in such a way pupils may learn to look for opportunities to develop thru genuine interests, rather than being stymied by the rigid and artificial definitions of scope now imposed upon them at registration time. This idea is germinal. It is worth testing on a large scale. Indeed, it is already in successful operation in extracurriculum activities such as music, dramatics, and athletics. It is not common to refuse a good halfback because he is not a senior, or a good pianist because he is a senior. In this connection, it is of interest to note that Mr. Gaffney's discussion of vital thinking and participation by students at New Trier draws most or all of its illustration from extracurriculum fields.

*Expanding Learning Experience*

If more schools were to extend the free opportunity to pupils to participate in planning their studies, it seems likely that Mr. Corey's final point—the need for each project to lead on into others with good results in the continuous widening and deepening of purpose, knowledge, and skill—might prevail much more than at present. Indeed, ten years ago, quite early in the professional effort to institute pupil participation in planning, one class of eighth-graders laid out and carried out two-and-a-half-years of work. It is obvious that such long-range thinking is *not* stimulated by conventional, teacher, or text-dictated assignments in semester courses. It is obvious, also, that no matter how unconventional the projects may be they have only limited value to the deep, inner growth of students if they are imposed from without and above. It may be refreshing to change from Greek history to clean-up campaigns, but only for the change itself unless

students see cleaning up as part of a big social purpose whose meaning they have shared in defining.

To sum up: Purpose—process—participants are each part of the other. As each changes the others will change. It is a testimony to the child's eagerness that he will do more effectively and joyously work in which he helps plan "how." Yet it is far from what he may do if the child has also a part in determining "what" and "why," particularly if not someone outside, but he himself, makes the judgments as to "how well" it has been done.

#### *Is Freedom Necessary?*

To go so far as this in approving the adventure into classroom democracy inevitably frightens those who see in it a threat to traditional, and often comfortable, educational authoritarianism. In the present volume it is interesting to note the range of interpretation given to the idea of group planning. At one end of the scale are illustrations which quite plainly tell the reader that administrators and teachers want chiefly to get children to do what they are told. To these, the success of group participation is measured by the extent to which children carry out their instructions willingly and cheerfully. At the other end of the scale are the reports from two teachers who not only welcome the children's ideas but who are made so secure in this effort by their administrator that they are able to point out their own mistakes.

A further illustration of the present general newness of democratic practice is found in the list of misconceptions which Mr. McSwain has so ably presented and discussed. Almost all of these express a fear that freedom will mean lack of control. The often unspoken but deeply felt worry of the misconceivers is that *they* will not be secure, that *they* will not have control if their students are encouraged to think and do for themselves. For such persons it is difficult to realize that a group may want to control itself. As stated earlier, it is now established, but not fully recognized, that every person desires order and form in his experience, so intensely, indeed, that the teacher's imposition of a particular kind of order may often create confusion by upsetting the child's attempt to create an order which is meaningful to him.

Because our society has made little use of child ability we are constantly surprised when children do important things or show a desire for excellence. We have heard much of the need for more emphasis on responsibility, less on privilege. But when you ask what responsibilities are children given the right to exercise, our society has not had good answers.

For reasons such as this, it is good to see that throughout this volume there is testimony (Miss Ryan's for example) to the fact that adults are impressed (surprised) by the clear thinking of children. There is recognition that

despite the time it takes there is much value in the planning meetings which take place when children and faculties think together rather than for each other. Finally, there is a getting away from the authoritarian approach in the emphasis in the Utah report on teaching as guidance. This last may be a good way of designating the difference between teaching as the creating of a good learning situation and teaching as spoon-feeding. Certainly it hits the nail on the head to say, as Mr. Anderson does, that the test of an educational process is the measure of the changes which take place in faculty and students. Both change, if both exchange. Furthermore, when Miss Merrick describes the development of a paper and pencil test in which students not only share in formulating the test itself but are free to draw a line thru statements they are unable to accept—this is symbolic of a great step—the recognition of a kind of student integrity which is not to be violated.

#### *What Happens When Groups Plan*

Mr. Anderson affirms the need for recognizing the true continuity of learning, the fact that if interest, zest, and creativeness are given play in the school experience, it will then affect basic attitudes which operate twenty-four hours a day. This is true, and it has much to do with his further point that participation cannot be forced upon people. As he cogently says, genuine participation grows, comes from within, cannot be required. The fact that thruout the present volume various writers repeat that the power of group planning is unbelievably great is a sign that a shared task is likely, more than a teacher-imposed task, to release the powers of the individual.

Miss Helseth adds another factor to be valued when she indicates that group planning and work invite outside participation by reason of the flexibility required where many minds are working together. Thus, as she says, the work is never closed to new ideas and materials as many assigned lessons must be. Miss Helseth's further evidence to the effect that students offer to adjust their own desires to achievement of the group purpose, to do and to give up doing, and to find the best in each other, is hopeful indeed.

This suggests that the great thing to be done in school is to teach to find ways of demonstrating that any group and any person has possibilities which may be assets not only to himself but to all. To develop these possibilities can then become a mutual effort of all. When this takes place, there comes an end to the fears and insecurities which hold back development—an end to the feeling of strangeness and doubt of self and of the world. Fellow workers are not strangers long, whereas boss and worker may be both strangers and hostile tho they are part of the same enterprise.

The paramount need of all of us to feel sufficiently confident of our-

selves so that we venture into expanding uses of our abilities can be materially greater in a school where not only teachers and children but administrators and parents take part in fostering such ventures. For this reason, the report of Mr. Rogers regarding the River Forest Board of Education and of Mr. Study regarding the ten years of similar effort in Springfield, Missouri, and its formal sanctions of staff participation in administration are most significant. For a schoolboard to go on public record in favor of group planning and wide participation in determining salaries, philosophy, curriculum, and such matters is something of a milestone in American education.

It would not do to say that the movement for democracy should always begin with the parents or the board or the superintendent or the teachers. It must, however, begin with someone, somewhere—whatever has the idea—but it cannot go far in any direction unless all these have some mutual concern that this process be tried, that its full power to encourage human growth be released. It is true, also, that till a new concept of authority (as the delegated responsibility for aiding all to achievement that all believe desirable) becomes more general, it is enormously helpful when, at the beginning, boards and administrators declare their support of the attempt to make democracy work.

In summary, we all know people who have learned rules in school—correct practices in English, for example—who do as little reading and writing as possible when they are free of the competitive compulsions of schools. We know others who have passed their history courses with high marks but who do little or nothing that is socially important. We know mathematicians who do not apply logic to daily living, and men trained in science who resist experimentalism in educational practice. These people are not the product of a new and untried philosophy of education. They are the graduates of our most conservative schools.

#### *The Fourth R*

In addition to the number of such people, there are the vast armies of men and women who left school before they finished with its "disciplines," the five who do not graduate, as compared to the one who does, after entering high school. Is it a fair question to ask that the school attempt to do more and better with the fourth *R* for both groups?—the *R* that stands for relationships of learning to living, of subjectmatter to the individual, of young and old to each other, of the school to the ideal of democracy.

Our time is one in which this question is as real and immediate as war and death can make it. The present volume on group planning is an evidence that men and women in many schools are deeply concerned with this question. Better still, they are at work, trying and testing as well as questioning.

### *The Long View*

The American educational scene has witnessed many changes—particularly in the additions to the curriculum. These additions have been made as pressure for this and that special subject—vocations in particular—has dictated. Hence a hodgepodge of “practical” courses, or else the serene and unchanging classical course called “college preparatory” or the equally rigid prescriptions of the technical training school.

#### *Sanctions*

Therefore, the contents of this volume represent an important new trend. It is a trend toward defining democratic procedures, designed to promote human development thru participation in thinking, doing, and evaluating. So long as the development of human beings is paramount, the matter of subject-skills must be seen under a new focus. The materials of study and skills for using them become matters of importance *as they serve child growth and social growth*. The sanction for inclusion or exclusion comes from the developmental needs of the human beings concerned, as they live *now*, in a society with democratic ideals.

This is a point which is made in this volume especially in reports from the elementary-school workers. Summed up, it amounts to saying that child growth is the goal; content and teaching practice are means.

#### *Feelings and Attitudes*

A second important emphasis which is made in several of the papers is that how people feel about things has a lot of bearing on what they will do and whether they do it with a will. There seems to be considerable agreement that a good attitude is basic to good learning. This seems to have the implication to the writers that participation in planning is a powerful leverage for moving attention, interest, and hard work toward a group goal. It is well pointed out that it does not matter so much who starts the planning or the idea, as that all shall have a genuine part in looking over it, altering it, and putting it into operation. Thus the teacher who hesitates to put forward an idea for fear of not being democratic is reassured. If that teacher stimulates free discussion and hard thinking, he is performing a truly democratic function—that of encouraging the use of more intelligence by more people. The danger is in putting something over—whether by force of authority or of personality—and thus narrowing participation and thinking.

#### *Democratic Leadership*

Another view of democratic leadership set forth in these papers, equally cogent, is that it is essential for some *one* to start a group functioning democratically. Democracy is not “natural”—it is learned. That is, it is most

natural for one to seek power and benefits for himself. It is less natural and more civilized for one to encourage and aid others. Competition is "natural." Cooperation has to be learned. Cooperative planning, a high example, requires seeing beyond the immediate to the long-range advantage. It is in the selfish interests of each participant—but not so obviously so as the immediate gain which may be snatched now.

These are general observations. They are made more specific in the case, for example, of the teacher's function. Here the whole function is supposedly that of aiding other persons to develop. But what kind of aid is most effective? That question has puzzled men of all ages. It is a glory of our times that we know enough to think of guidance, a personalized aid, as essential. Yet in the field of guidance, there are two contrasting views. One, by far the more popular, is that once the guide knows enough, he can tell the one to be guided what to do. This is popular with many guidance counselors as with many of those counseled. It seems finished, final, definite. It gives the guide a sense of omniscience and it relieves the guided person of responsibility.

The other newer, less popular view is that the guide aids the individual (or group) to see things for himself. Specifically as one writer in this book points out, it is guidance to define problems, to plan, to investigate, to organize, to express, to evaluate for *one's self*. All of these activities may be encouraged by the teacher-guide thru many means, adjusted to the nature of the particular situation and persons involved in it. To the extent that students forge their own definitions and plans; investigate for themselves, organize, express, and evaluate under their own power—to that extent the student is experiencing and learning firsthand (which means at the best).

Most of the writers for the present volume show that they understand this. They tell of children in the fourth grade and of teachers and of administrators who are seeking, trying, and learning for themselves. A few discordant notes are sounded in one or two of the papers, however. In one or two cases it is evident that the author conceives of democratic planning as a name for a process of getting children to take responsibility for something which adults impose upon them. The basic harm in this procedure is lessened, of course, so long as the adult honestly states his purpose, and points out the limited freedom of inquiry (limited usually to a discussion of the *method* of doing what he requires) which he is permitting. With all hands recognizing these facts, the chief harm comes from narrowing the child's experience.

There is always a danger when the teacher fears to trust children to think about "why?" that a nazified corruption of democracy will take place. I refer to "selling," putting things over, sugar-coating reality—in short, making children think, temporarily, that they have an opportunity

to contribute, when actually they are being subtly inveigled into doing what they are told. As one boy put it: "The teachers really do the thinking and deciding, but if anything goes wrong they blame the kids for it." *Temporarily*, you see, because, like the boy just quoted, children are not likely to be fooled for long. When they feel they have been tricked (oversold is the business term) they are likely to lose a lot of faith in school and even in democracy.

#### *Unsolved Issues*

What is the democratic process of educational planning?

In view of the fact that no one knows a final answer, and in view of the confusion over what is genuine and what is not, it may be useful to list some of the issues which have been raised by the papers given in this volume.

1. Can all human beings grow? If so, do we want them to grow?
2. Do we want to bother with the struggle to find ways of encouraging all to participate?
3. Is a broad and inclusive problem or study area as desirable as a neatly packaged textbook assignment?
4. Are individual and special interests worth the trouble and time?
5. Are schools and communities really concerned with the unique personality of each person? Does mass education permit such a concern to function at all?
6. Can the teacher hope to find methods, time, and energy to study the relation of this year's work to the past experience and the future hopes of her students?
7. Can the teacher feel secure enough to accept a changing rather than a fixed plan?
8. Is it worthwhile to look for good qualities in dull or discontented pupils?
9. Is there time enough to develop order and form afresh with each new group and each new enterprise?

With regard to No. 9, there is a statement in the present volume that certain changes in teacher and administrative relations have taken place over the last ten years in Springfield. A report from Utah states that after a year of meetings, teachers feel that they are growing in their ability to operate democratically but the real pay-off is still to come. Evidently it is not a rapid or a simple matter to bring about or to measure human growth. Yet, quite as evidently, there is a widespread recognition that there are deeply felt values in democratic procedure. This indicates the need at all levels of the process—child and adult—for more investigation of how to measure, or, at the least, how to record indicative evidence as to what things lead to inner changes which make outward progress possible and likely.

*Social Responsibility*

There is great emphasis and agreement from the small rural schools as from the large city schools, from elementary, high-school, and college teachers, on the conclusion that thru shared planning comes a highly significant increase in social responsibility. There is considerable documentation of a sort for this conclusion, largely in the form of projects now being carried on as a result of such planning. To name a few: voluntary in-service, self-training of teachers, record-keeping, a code of ethics, a school clean-up, intercultural programs, the development and use of a school philosophy, a budget schedule, self-government study halls, self-evaluation by school staffs. These are accomplished facts and there is good in all. Some are distinguished examples of improved practices. Yet such evidence is not enough, apparently, for those who fear the wide sharing of ideas, the wide trust in intelligence, the wide extension of responsibility which the democratic process involves. Paul Mallon, a national columnist who attributes juvenile delinquency to child-centered schools; the university president in the South who attributes the war to progressive education—such people are ignorant of the facts, yes, but they do not wish to recognize them when they are told.

The present volume is a contribution to the attempt to make evaluations and reports. There may be, however, still other means than those given here for telling and illuminating the story of human growth. Perhaps genetic studies which include the whole community and a whole generation of people are the only answers in the end. In the meantime, to multiply such records as are gathered here is an urgent need if educators are to contribute more to the immediate understanding and use of the discovery that the *way* of democracy is not only idealistic but practical and efficient.

*Technics*

It requires technics and organization to make a good idea go to work. In this volume some of these are described. "Thinking things out together," the establishment of teacher councils and committees, the enabling code of a board of education, the state department of education's encouragement of local planning, workshops, and conferences—these are some of the technics and organizational procedures which are given.

*Faith*

It requires faith in the idea to set people to work finding the ways to make it work. An abundance of such faith is expressed thru the present volume.

*Freedom*

It requires freedom—to inquire, to try, to make mistakes, and to change—in order to sustain the faith and the effort to translate it into action.

*To Sum Up*

The freedom, the faith, the technics—all these are strengthened and multiplied in each classroom, as in American education as a whole, by the knowledge that others of like mind are at work. This volume brings together reports from some such persons. It has a high value to them as a center for exchange. It has a potential value in the whole country if it brings word to hundreds and thousands of others, who are endeavoring just as persistently and effectively, that their efforts are part of a growing enterprise to find increasing occasion and means for putting the democratic ideal into practice.

The beginning can be made, as shown here, by any teacher and class, by teachers in their relationships to each other, by administrators and their staffs. There remain great and challenging fields to explore where achievements may rise beyond anything now known—the field of recording and reporting to the public as well as to the profession—this as concomitant with the great aim of communitywide planning and action for the life-long education of all our people. Such an education will deal with all aspects of daily living. The teacher will be Experience. The school, Life. The learners, old and young, will aid each other to perceive, to plan, and to act.



*Courtesy of National Youth Administration, Washington, D. C.*

**Learning takes many forms when a group  
plans its own experiences**

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